

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF TSWANA CULTURAL IDENTITY
IN SELECTED TSWANA LITERARY TEXTS**

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Finally I would like to thank God for protecting me through this study and giving me the strength and patience to bring the research to completion.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my late parents-in-law, *Ramonaka Pilane* and *Setobana Stella Pilane*, who passed away before they could enjoy the fruits of their daughter-in-law's studies.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor at the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, hereby submitted by me, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this University and that all sources referred to have been acknowledged.

GABAITSIWE ELIZABETH PILANE

2002

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyse the construction of Setswana cultural identity in the Tswana literary texts : *Pelo e ja serati*; *Dintshontsho tsa lorato*; *Maragana*; *Magagana*; *Pelo e ntsho*; *Matlhotlhapelo*; *Bogosi kupe* and *Moji Motlhabi*. Chapter One outlines and motivates the aims and objectives, the basic problem and indicates the method thereof.

In chapter two, the Batswana cultural identity is explored. A broad overview of the secondary literature on four themes in Batswana culture is given. The chapter indicates the history of the Batswana in South Africa, their groupings in the Western Tswana and in the Eastern Tswana. A brief history of the Batswana in Botswana and in South Africa is also given. The distinctive feature of the Batswana identity and the importance of the Batswana cultural aspects are examined. The meaning of these aspects is drawn out and elaborated to its final conclusion. Lastly, the link between literature and cultural identity is conceptualised.

In chapter three the construction of cultural identity in Setswana culture according to interviewees is explored. The life-history of the interviewees and their response to the selected cultural aspects are given. Their feelings of being Batswana are also examined.

In chapter four a critical analysis of the texts used in this study is given. They all problematise and deal with four important cultural practices of the Batswana, viz. marriage customs, chieftainship, ancestors, witchcraft and traditional healing.

In the last chapter the conclusions of this study are summarised. The central argument was to indicate how cultural identity is maintained, negotiated or transmitted by these texts and how to determine whether these texts can open up new possibilities of being a Motswana. The final findings of the whole study and some recommendations are also presented.

The conclusion is that literature maintains, reveals and transmits the Batswana culture, not only to the youths out there, but also to the older people in order to recognise its importance and their cultural identity.

OPSOMMING

Die basiese doel van hierdie proefskrif was om die konstruksie van die Setswana kulturele identiteit in die gekose Tswana literêre tekste *Pelo e ja serati*; *Dintshontsho tsa lorato*; *Maragana*; *Magagana*; *Pelo e ntsho*; *Matlhotlhapelo*; *Bogosi kupe* en *Moji Motlhabi* te ontleed. Hoofstuk een skets en motiveer die doel, die basiese probleemstelling en die metode van die studie.

In hoofstuk twee word die Batswana kulturele identiteit ondersoek. 'n Brëe oorsig van die sekondêre literatuur oor vier temas in die Batswana-kultuur word gegee. Die hoofstuk skets die geskiedenis van die Batswana in suider Afrika en hulle groepering in die Wes-Tswana en die Oos-Tswana. 'n Kort geskiedenis van die Batswana in Botswana en in Suid Afrika word gegee. Die onderskeidende hooftrekke van die Batswana-identiteit en die belangrikheid van die Batswana kulturele aspekte is ook ondersoek. Die betekenis van hierdie aspekte is noukeurig uitgewerk en ten laaste is die verband tussen literatuur en kulturele identiteit gekonseptualiseer.

Hoofstuk drie ondersoek die konstruksie van kulturele identiteit van die Batswana volgens 'n aantal ondervraagdes. Die lewensgeskiedenis van die ondervraagdes en hulle reaksie op die gekose kulturele aspekte word gegee. Hulle aanvoeling van Batswana te wees is ook ondersoek.

Hoofstuk vier gee die literêre ontleding van die tekste wat gebruik is in hierdie studie. Hulle problematiseer en behandel vier belangrike kulturele praktyke van die Batswana nl. huiweliksgewoontes, die voorvaders, kapteinskap, en tradisionele genesing en toordery.

Die laaste hoofstuk som die gevolgtrekkinge van hierdie studie op. Die sentrale probleem was om te bewys hoe kulturele identiteit gehandhaaf, onderhandel of oorgedra word deur van hierdie tekste en hoe om te bepaal of hierdie tekste nuwe moontlikhede om Tswana te wees oopmaak. Die hoofstuk ook gee die finale bevindings van die hele studie en maak aanbevelings daarvoor.

Die gevolgtrekking is dat letterkunde die Batswana- kultuur handhaaf, weerspieël, oordra nie net aan jong mense nie maar ook aan volwassenes sodat hulle die belangrikheid van hulle kultuur en hulle kulturele identiteit kan erken.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the 19th century the Batswana, like many African societies, have experienced rapid westernisation. Christianity has also spread quickly in Africa and has influenced most of the people including the Batswana. The Batswana are nowadays caught between their culture and Western civilisation. Because of the pressure of civilisation, most of the Batswana have abandoned their traditional practices and are changing so that they can fit into the new dispensation and be able to face the drastic changes in their country.

People believe that going back to our African roots is one way of searching for what we possess and what we are in need of. One of the most important things that we need to scrutinise is our culture. Culture, it is believed, distinguishes between good and evil, what is beautiful and what is ugly, what is legitimate and what is illegitimate. It is also believed that culture can determine people's behaviour and teach the young generation respect. These are the cultural values that the people and the country wish but not all of them are of the same opinion.

1.2 CONTEXTUALISATION

This study is an investigation into the construction of Batswana cultural identity in a number of Tswana literary texts from the period 1960 to 1989. As Greenblatt (1990) argues, literary texts play an important part in articulating and maintaining social norms, especially by marking exclusions from what is generally accepted. Texts also enact, among other things, how individuals negotiate their positions within these cultural boundaries and, in so doing, construct themselves. Literary works thus form an integral part of culture seen as a dynamic whole.

Seeing culture as a dynamic whole means that the practices of a national or ethnic group constitute a system that informs the whole social activity of a nation, people or group. Brock & Tulasiewicz (1985:4) sum this up by saying: "Cultural identity is used to designate a distinctive way of life, to refer to a pattern of life in a society". This means that people are identified by their cultural practices and that cultural identity is a key factor in shaping their

lives, since it determines how members of a society think and feel about themselves and their culture. To a certain extent it also dictates the pattern of cultural practices they will follow.

Cultural identity is, therefore, much more than simply a matter of distinguishing between people: it also determines how people see themselves and the world. As Corbey and Leerssen (1991:5) write: “All human cultures articulate, situate themselves by categorising the world”. This involves a distinction between what is permitted in the sphere of culture, and what is excluded. The excluded and relevant customs or practices are interconnected.

It therefore can be said that “cultural identity is the internalised cultural consciousness, an identification with a distinct concept of reality accepted by virtue of participation in it” (Brock & Tulasiewicz 1985:4). This implies that culture is learned from one generation to another. Haralambos (1980:3) stresses that “culture of a society is the way of life of its members, the collection of ideas and habits which they learn, share and transmit from generation to generation”. Alasuutari (1995:25) writes that “the concept of culture has been taken to refer to something like collective subjectivity - that is a way of life or outlook adopted by a community or a social class”. Using a modern metaphor, Hofstede (1991:5) defines culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another”.

According to Haralambos (1980:5), “every culture contains a large number of guidelines which direct conduct in particular situations”. Many of these guidelines are represented in texts, which therefore are not only important sources of cultural knowledge, but also devices for maintaining cultural practices and for safeguarding and redefining traditional norms. This can be illustrated in the way traditional culture is negotiated in the chosen texts. The conflict between traditional marriage customs and the modern idea of marrying for love is acted out in *Dintshontsho tsa lorato* and *Pelo e ja serati*. Important to the resolution of the plot in *Pelo e ja serati* is the Mountain of the Ancestors, which the heroine cannot approach unless protected by powerful charms. *Bogosi Kupe* illustrates that interfering with chieftainship instituted by the ancestors will be punished. *Moji Motlhabi* indicates the power of the ancestors by involving them in everything he does, e.g. performing their rituals. In *Pelo e ntsho* Keikepetse consults a traditional doctor to help him gain the love of Tsholofelo, as does Maitsegotlhe in *Matlhotlhapelo* to help him after his quarrel with Kedigapile.

Chieftainship and questions like who should succeed the chief, how chiefs should be honoured and how one can get rid of a bad ruler, are the central issues in both *Maragana* and *Magagana*.

Culture and identity are closely linked. Bloom (1990:53) writes that the “identification of culture is an inherent and unconscious behavioural imperative in that all individuals seek to identify in order to achieve cultural security, and they actively seek to maintain, protect and bolster identity in order to maintain and enhance this cultural security which is of stability and emotional well-being”. Gellner (1994:45) stresses that :

“cultural identity is not a delusion, excogitated by muddled romantics, disseminated by irresponsible extremists, and used by egotistical privileged classes to befuddle the masses, and to hide them through interests from them. Its appeal is rooted in the real conditions of modern life, and cannot be conjured away, either by sheer good will and the preaching of a good spirit of universal brotherhood, or by the incarceration of the extremists. We have to understand those roots and live with their fruits, whether we like them or not”.

The fact that we cannot do away with cultural identity and that our lives are rooted in an internalised cultural consciousness, illustrate how important research on cultural identity is.

In order to understand cultural identity, one would have to analyse the cultural practices of different tribes or groups and their ways of doing things in order to determine how these things contribute to their life as a whole and to their literature. The analysis of cultural identity clarifies the distinctive meanings and values of a particular culture. This includes criticism in which intellectual and imaginative works are analysed in relation to particular traditions and societies. It is in the last-mentioned area that this study wants to make a contribution.

Today some traditional customs, like the ‘bogwera’ and ‘bojale’ where boys and girls are taught the norms and values of their tribe, are no longer generally practised among the Batswana. Circumcision that was done by the traditional doctors is now mostly performed in hospitals. Despite such changes many Batswana still practise their customs because these customs help them feel free and unique and lead to their identification as a particular tribe.

Distinctive for the Batswana are their culture and customs, their traditional songs, traditional clothes, as well as their distinctive marriage customs, ways of honouring their ancestors and chiefs and beliefs in traditional healing and witchcraft. Cultural identity is partly constituted by the cultural practices that identify and distinguish a tribe.

Since the field of culture and cultural identity is wide and varied, it is a practical necessity to limit the research to a number of cultural practices in a manageable number of texts. Four aspects generally figure strongly in discussions of African cultures, viz. marriage customs, ancestral worship, the institution of chieftains, and traditional healing and witchcraft. In Tswana culture, marriage relations are part of treating people with respect. Chieftainship is an important aspect in the life of the Batswana, who often still live under the authority of their chiefs. The important role of ancestors in Tswana culture is reflected in feasts to honour the ancestors that are described in Tswana literature. In many Tswana works, healing and witchcraft play an important part in the plot. It is for these reasons that these four aspects of culture were chosen for consideration. With these four important facets of Tswana culture as guidelines, the following texts were selected for study: *Pelo e ja serati*, written by J.M. Ntsime and published in 1982. *Dintshontsho tsa lorato*, written by L.D. Raditladi and published in 1967. *Maragana* and *Magagana*, both texts were written by D.M. Modise, published in 1965 and 1981. *Bogosi Kupe*, published in 1967 and the author is D.P.S. Monyaise. *Moji Motlhabi*, written by D.P. Moloto and it was published in 1967. *Pelo e ntsho* written by J.M. Ntsime and published in 1979. *Matlhotlhapelo* is also one of Ntsime's books, published in 1984.

All the texts are old and contain important issues but they still fit well into our present day life as culture is nowadays important to all South Africans.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The argument above leads to the following central question:

How is Batswana cultural identity constructed in the texts under consideration?

This entails three subordinate questions:

1. How is Batswana cultural identity constructed and reflected in the texts under consideration?
2. How is cultural identity maintained, transmitted and negotiated in these texts?

3. Do these texts open up new possibilities of being Batswana (i.e. ways to reshape Batswana cultural identity)?

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The present study wants to make a contribution to our understanding of the relationship between cultural identity and Tswana literature, especially by analysing how cultural identity is constructed, negotiated, reflected or maintained in Tswana literary texts. Put formally, the primary aim of this research project is to determine how cultural identity is constructed in and through these texts.

This can be broken down into three secondary aims, viz.:

1. To determine how cultural identity is constructed and reflected in the texts under consideration.
2. To indicate how cultural identity is maintained, negotiated or transmitted by these texts.
3. To determine whether these texts can open up new possibilities of being Batswana.

The aims and objectives of this thesis will be clearly outlined in the hypothesis to show its importance.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS

It can be surmised that the way in which these texts deal with the four aspects of culture under consideration does not only reflect cultural practices, but also shows up the norms underlying these customs and how people deal with these norms. The general hypothesis of this study is thus that Tswana literary texts are important in the construction, maintenance, transmission, change and negotiation of cultural identity and that it may also open up new possibilities of being Tswana.

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

After a preliminary survey of the role that the four aspects of culture play in the selected novels, a broad study of the literature on Tswana society about the four themes and how they have changed through time will be made. Next, a critical study of the research on cultural identity and the construction of identity will be made. Written sources on Tswana culture, like Booyens (1984), Lye & Murray (1980), Schapera (1968) and Schapera (1970) are quite

old. To supplement this existing body of research (and not to conduct a full-blown qualitative inquiry), structured interviews were conducted with a number of Tswana spokespeople, selected according to age, gender, educational level and degree of urbanisation (urban vs. rural). People's life stories and how they understand their own identity and their differences from other people formed important parts of these interviews. The analysis of the texts will be presented in chapter four.

A preliminary survey of the role of the four cultural aspects in the selected novels will be integrated into chapter four for economy's sake and in order to eliminate repetition.

In the final chapter conclusions on the relationship between cultural identity and the texts under discussion as well as recommendations will be formulated.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The thesis is divided into the following chapters and sections:

1. Introduction: Contextualisation and research design
 2. Tswana culture and the construction of cultural identity
 - 2.1 A broad overview of the secondary literature on the four themes in Tswana society and how they changed through time
 - 2.2 A critical analysis of the research on cultural identity and the construction of identity
 - 2.3 Conceptualising the link between literature and cultural identity
 3. The construction of cultural identity (us - them) in Tswana culture according to spokespeople
 - 3.1 Marriage customs
 - 3.2 Honouring the chiefs
 - 3.3 Worshipping ancestors
 - 3.4 Witchcraft and traditional healing
 4. The construction of cultural identity in the selected texts:
 - 4.1 Cultural identity constructed through redefining marriage customs - *Pelo e ja serati* and *Dintshontsho tsa lorato*
 - 4.2 Cultural identity and the role of chiefs - *Maragana* and *Magagana*
 - 4.3 Cultural identity and honouring the ancestors - *Pelo e ja serati* and *Bogosi Kupe*
-

4.4 Cultural identity and witchcraft and traditional healing - *Pelo e ntsho* and *Matlhotlhapelo*.

5. Conclusions, findings and recommendations.

The next chapter will focus on Tswana culture and the construction of cultural identity. It will also give a broad overview of the secondary literature on the four themes in Batswana society, a history of the Batswana in Botswana and also in South Africa up to the present.

CHAPTER 2

TSWANA CULTURE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

The word "culture" is rich in meaning. It does not only have a long history in its academic sense, but it is also freely used in ordinary language. Culture is linked to civilisation and society from lower to higher levels of civilisation.

Culture is part of our lives and of our environment. It is an aspect of human reality and an extremely important aspect. The things that we learn and practise characterise the behaviour of individuals and of groups. Culture is essentially a construct that describes the total body of beliefs, the way of life of any people, the things that such a people have, the things they do and what they think.

Shennan (1989:12) stresses that "culture is viewed as a vast flowing stream with minor variations in ideational norms concerning appropriate ways of making pots, getting married, treating one's mother-in-law, and building houses."

Huntington (1990:21) remarks that "people are not ideological, political or economic but they are cultural". Huntington stresses that people answer the question of who they are in the traditional way human beings have always answered it, that is by reference to the things that mean most to them. People define themselves in terms of ancestry, religion, language, history, customs and institutions. They identify themselves with cultural groups, tribes and civilisations. According to him people use politics not just to advance their interests but also to define their identity. A people or a tribe can be identified by its culture and language. Every tribe practises its own culture and customs. Today the Batswana are civilised but they haven't forgotten their roots or their culture. However, Lye & Murray (1980:20) emphasise the diversity of the Batswana today, writing that "the Batswana are Christians and traditional, they are down-to-earth country people and sophisticated townspeople". Most of the Batswana today live in the urban areas of South Africa and Botswana.

The aim of this chapter is to give a broad overview of the secondary literature on the four themes i.e. marriage, ancestors, witchcraft and chieftainship in Batswana society and how

they changed through time. As background, an outline of the history of the Batswana in South Africa and the Batswana in Botswana is provided, emphasising the role of language as a distinctive feature of Batswana cultural identity. This will be followed by a critical analysis of the research on cultural identity. Finally, the construction of identity and ways of conceptualising the link between literature and cultural identity will be considered.

2.1 A BROAD OVERVIEW OF THE SECONDARY LITERATURE ON THE FOUR THEMES IN BATSWANA CULTURE

The aim of this section is to give a broad overview of the key aspects of the Batswana culture that were selected as making it distinctive from other cultures, and to explore the four themes. Before discussing the culture of the Batswana society, the important thing is to know the nation or the society we are dealing with, i.e. the Batswana people, and something of their history.

Before the coming of the Europeans, the life of the Batswana was based on agriculture and stock farming. Today this is not possible in most parts of the country. Cattle farming is still an important aspect of the Batswana life, especially in Botswana.

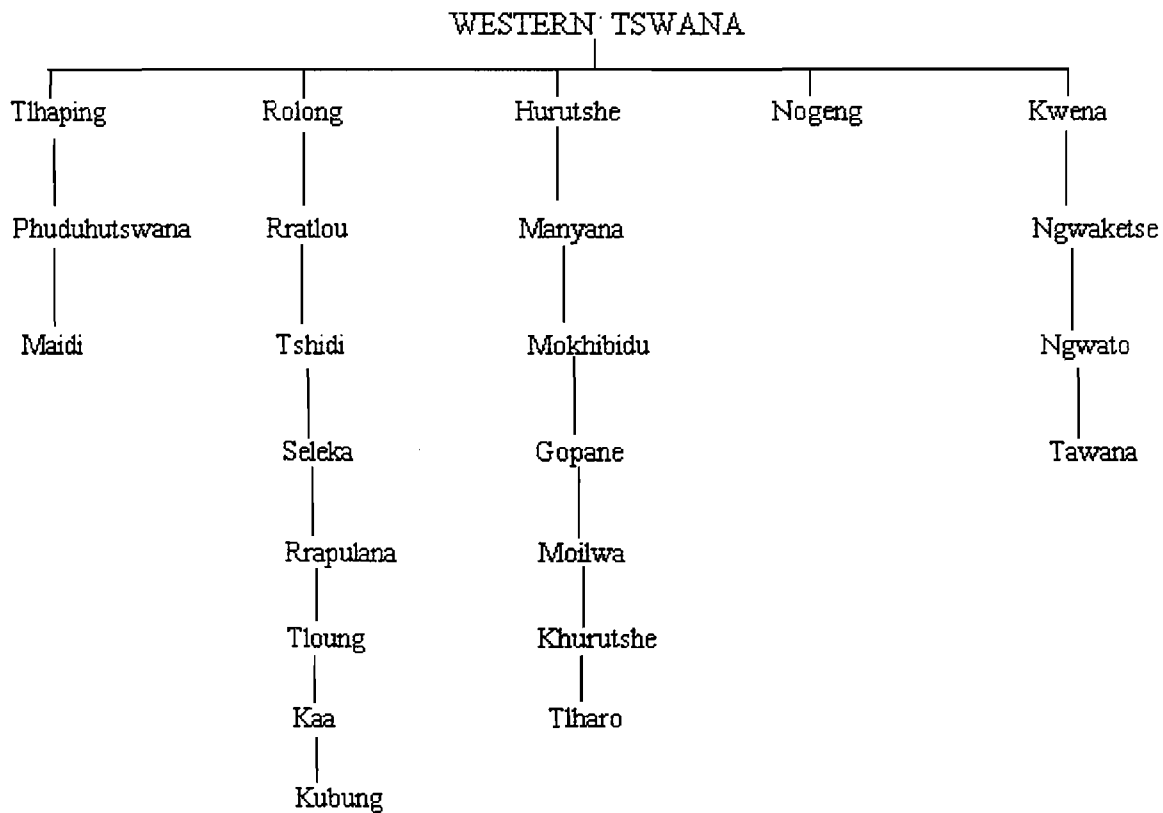
For the purpose of this discussion, the Batswana are divided into two groups viz. the Batswana in the Republic of South Africa and the Batswana in Botswana.

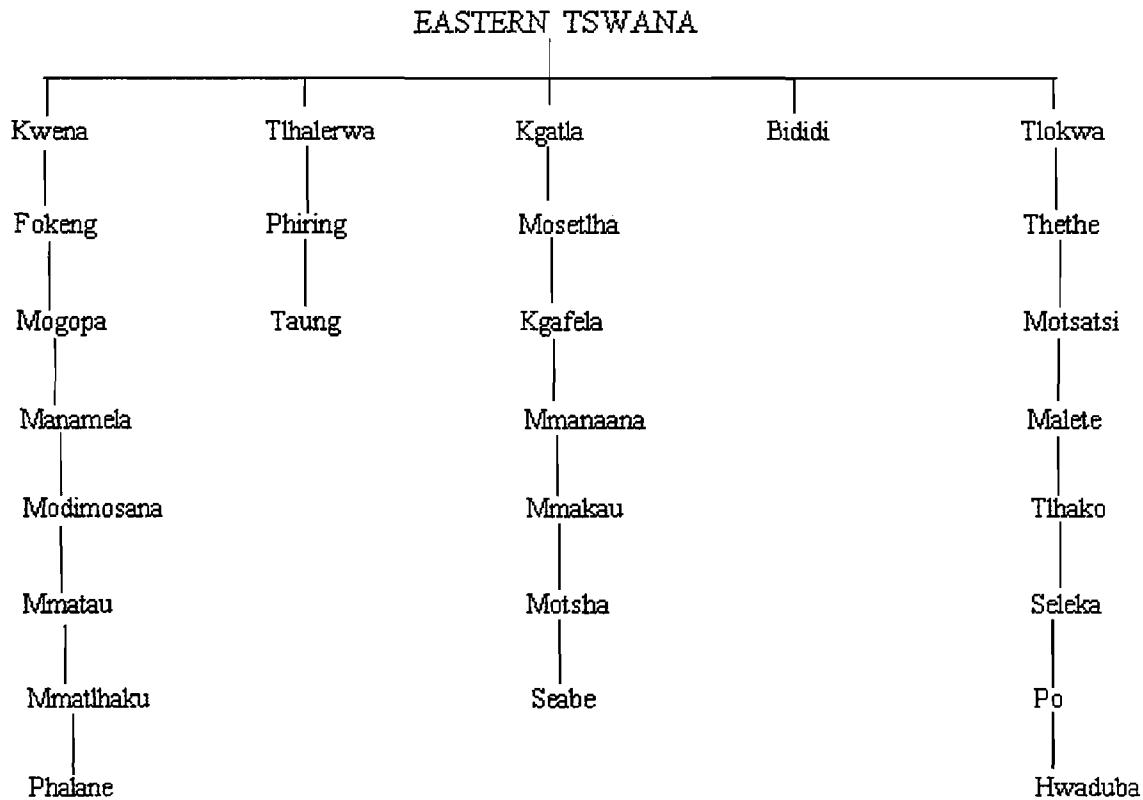
2.2. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BATSWANA IN SOUTH AFRICA

The people identified as the Batswana form the nation that speaks Setswana and lives in accordance with the Batswana cultural laws and customs. The Batswana originally were known as Basutho or Bantu people, but nowadays all members accept and use Batswana as a common name. According to Schapera (1953:9) “the name Batswana has been variously interpreted as meaning “the little offshoots” (from -tswa) and “those who are alike” from -tshwaana.” According to Lye & Murray (1980:24) the Batswana people trace their origin to the ‘Cave of Lowe’ or to a bed of reeds at Ntswana-tsatsi (where the sun rises). To confirm their commitment to that understanding, many mothers announce the birth of their child by placing a reed across their door. Many people today still use this method.

The Batswana used to live in the eastern, western and central districts of the Transvaal, viz. the Marico, Rustenburg, Pretoria, Ventersdorp, Lichtenburg, Mafikeng, Vryburg, Kuruman and Taung area. According to Schapera (1953:10) "the differences between the Tswana are partly geographical, partly cultural and historical". He divided them into two groups, Western and Eastern. Each subgroup is composed of several tribes.

Diagram 1. GEOGRAPHICAL GROUPING OF THE BATSWANA.





Today the Batswana society or people as Schapera (1977:2) and Lye & Murray (1980:27) say are distributed all over South Africa, but most of them are found in the Northern Cape and North West Provinces of South Africa and in Botswana.

It is believed that the Basotho people, to whom the Batswana belonged in the 19th century, came from Central Africa in the vicinity of the Great Lakes of East Africa. They moved southwards and entered South Africa in three series of migrations. The first group is represented today by the people collectively known as Kgalagadi, who settled in the eastern parts of Botswana. The second group consists of the ancestors of the modern Rolong and Tlhaping, who settled along the upper reaches of the Molopo River. The third and the largest group settled as a united body in the modern North West Province and broke up into separate clusters like the Hurutshe, Kwena and Kgatla (Schapera 1977:3).

According to Schapera (1953:15) the Batswana were already in the eastern half of their present habitat by about 1600. Each of the existing clusters became increasingly subdivided. It became a tradition in Batswana history for a part of a tribe to unite under a discontented member of the ruling family and to move away to a new locality. In this way the Kgatla, an

early offshoot of the Hurutshe, broke up into the modern Kgatla tribes, the Mosetlha, Kgafela, Mmanaana, Mmakau, Mosetšha, etc.

2.2.1 TRADITIONAL/PRE-HISTORIC TIMES

The Batswana of the early 1800s were primarily hunters and pastoralists. They kept cattle for their milk and for the accumulation of trading and investment capital, only rarely treating them as a source of meat. In common with many other African cattle-keeping people, cattle formed an important part of a bride's wealth. The principal diet was sour milk and game meat and this was supplemented with the meat of goats, sheep as well as veldkos such as sorghum (mabele) (Shillington 1985:8).

According to Schapera (1953:20), "formerly the Tswana were almost entirely self-supporting". The Batswana produced their own food by agriculture and cattle farming. They built their own homes and made their own clothing and household goods from materials locally available. A boy's duty was to look after the cattle and a girl's responsibility was at home, i.e. to clean the house, to cook, etc. They rarely became ill. Today their food has changed. They have a Western diet. Despite the changes we have today, most Batswana still depend mainly upon the land for food and many raw materials. Today they have jobs and earn money. They are able to buy food. The Batswana didn't build big houses like today. The only kind of houses that existed were huts, which were made of mud and had thatched roofs.

In traditional Batswana society the idea of "work" did not exist. There were no expensive clothes, no expensive food and furniture. People were not working but they survived. Today, most of the Batswana live in urban areas. Many of them are unemployed today and have difficulties in making ends meet. Many of them spend their working lives as migrants between their rural homes and employment in the white urban areas, in the mining, manufacturing, construction and service industries. Foster (1962:29) aligns himself with Lye and Murray that "cities are the focal points of change". People are moving to urban areas to seek a better life.

The smallest productive unit within Batswana society was the household which consisted of a married man, his wife or wives and their children, aged grandparents and other relatives.

The village came under the leadership of a headman who had specific local administrative and judicial powers and functions and was answerable for his ward to the chief of the tribe. Such a group is most commonly referred to by the Batswana as a kgotla (Schapera 1977:19). The chief himself was also head of a council of headmen which settled the more serious civil disputes and decided matters of major importance to the whole polity (Shillington 1985:8).

At the household level in the villages, it was the duty of the men to tend to the household stock. At the higher level there was the regular Kgotla to attend, to discuss and settle the administrative and judicial affairs of the local ward or village. Much of the activity of the men was organised on the wider basis of age - regiments (mephato) which bound the polity under the leadership of the chief (Shillington 1985:10).

The chief organised everything for the tribe and was also responsible for initiation. The post-adolescent initiation ceremonies that are 'bogwera' for boys and 'bojale' for girls, were organised on the authority of the chief and were held at intervals of several years. Bogwera, which included subjection to hardship and deprivation, and instruction in the songs, traditions, customs and duties of being a full male or female member of the polity, culminated in circumcision and entitlement to marriage. The regiments formed during initiation under the leadership of the chief's son was an effective means of binding the people together across all parochial loyalties and provide the chief with regiments which could be summoned to perform some public work or more frequently (in the early 1820s) for defensive or offensive purposes. After bojale, women were also formed into regiments though they were not so important (Shillington 1985:11). The main use of the regiments was the capture or recovery of stolen cattle or pastures and the organisation of the annual animal grand winter hunt, 'letsholo'.

Trading was very important as it kept communications alive over great distances. The Bangwato of Botswana traded tobacco from the Bakalanga and took it south to trade with the Bakwena. Trade routes stretched all across Botswana and far into the neighbouring area. Long before the Griqua and European traders arrived people were traveling from Molepolole to lake Ngami and southwards towards the Orange River (Tlou & Campbell 1994:120).

The Griqua were the first wagon traders to reach the Batswana. They lived on the Orange River where they had come from the south to escape the rule of the Dutch. The Bangwaketse were carrying ivory to the Orange River to trade with them. This was the start of the ivory trail into Botswana. By 1847 the Batswana had crossed the edges of the Kalahari to Ngamiland. By 1850 they had reached the Chobe River (Tlou & Campbell 1994:121).

The Europeans who started to come to Botswana after 1810 were mostly adventurers. They wanted to see new people, lands and to hunt animals they had never seen before. Other missionaries who came at this time wanted to change Setswana life to make the Batswana believe in the Christian God and live according to the Bible (Tlou & Campbell 1994:122).

By the late 19th century the Batswana had developed an active trade in cattle, Sibilo and beads with the Kora and Griqua to their south. By the 1820s there remained little incentive for the Tlhaping and Tlharo of the confederation to continue to contend with the poor grazing of the Kuruman region. It was at this point that the shock waves of the Difaqane first began to be felt by the weakened Batswana (see 2.5 below).

2.2.2 FIRST ENCOUNTERS WITH THE WHITES (MISSIONARIES)

During the 19th century the Western civilisation came among the Batswana people, firstly among the Tlhaping tribe from the Cape. Robert Moffat, who settled among the Batswana, made many chiefdoms accept missionaries. The work of the missionaries laid the foundations of a Setswana literature. Moffat began with the translation of the Bible into Setswana in 1828. It took 29 years to complete. The first book, Lucas, was completed in 1829 and printed in Cape Town in 1830. In 1837 James Archbell published the first Tswana grammar called *A grammar of the Bechuana language*. Robert Moffat also translated the old Testament in 1841. Towards 1845 Moffat began to translate *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The translation was completed in 1846 and printed in 1848. In 1838 the new Testament was translated, and Moffat printed it during his visit in England. In England he also translated the Psalms. When the London Missionary Society evacuated Shoshong as the result of the Boer attack in 1852, Livingstone had already begun with his explorations (Lye & Murray 1980:65). In 1853 the first part of the old Testament was printed in Kuruman and the second part was published in 1857. Before the missionaries came, there was no writing or reading. The missionaries wanted the Batswana to know how to read so that they could read the Bible. John Campbell

wrote the Lord's prayer in Setswana (Rara wa rona - Our father). Robert Moffat assisted by Hamilton, made the first serious effort to produce Setswana literature.

The primary objective of the missionaries was to convert Africans. Christianity reached the Batswana even before the end of the Difaqane, primarily through missionaries of the London Missionary Society (1816) and the Wesleyans (1823). During the Difaqane time, the Batswana became vulnerable. Their Difaqane experience, the Boer expansion, and the continuing Ndebele threat, made the Batswana particularly receptive to missionary influence (Maylam 1986:121).

Missionaries were welcomed as advisors and potential mediators, and their presence was seen as a form of protection against external aggression. The missionaries introduced literacy and Western forms of education. Schools were built, religious and educational materials were translated and published in local dialects. The missionaries attacked various common Tswana practices, especially polygamy, the payment of brides-wealth, circumcision and rainmaking (Maylam 1986:121). Christianity and missionary influence at times formed a source of division within Tswana communities.

In 1819 the missionary, James Read, wrote a small spelling book which was printed at Griqua town. In 1820 the Kuruman mission was not prosperous. In 1821 Robert Moffat took charge of the mission at Kuruman. He was a gardener. He was essentially evangelical, holding that the missionary's primary task was to teach poor heathens to know the Saviour.

Robert Moffat became the most important missionary in the Batswana history. He settled permanently amongst the Tlhaping in 1821. In Britain he influenced others to take up the work, including David Livingstone, who followed him to Africa and opened a path for missionaries, traders and settlers into the heart of the continent. Moffat's career extended for 50 years, mainly in Kuruman. David Livingstone began his career as a missionary for the London Missionary Society amongst the Batswana (Lye & Murray 1980:65).

The Methodists started under the Seleka Rolong in 1823 and followed their destitute hosts until they finally settled at Thaba Nchu. In 1824, Moffat, with his gardener's eye persuaded Mothibi to move his capital a few miles upstream to Seoding.

The first years of Moffat's ministry were difficult and dangerous. This was the time of turmoil called Difaqane, when the wars of the Zulu tyrant Shaka had thrown South Africa into chaos and confusion (Sillery 1971:13-20).

The missionaries aimed at saving souls and not at improving the economic or social life of the Batswana. They wanted to convert the Batswana to Christianity. One of the ways to do this was to enable the people to read the Bible. (Tlou & Campbell 1984:136). Mission stations were also established among the Rolong, Hurutshe, Mmanaana, Kgatla and Kwena during the 19th century. Among these tribes, Christianity challenged traditional relationships, by which new religious and secular knowledge penetrated every village. These transitions transformed Batswana life during the remainder of the century (Viljoen 1981:78-80).

Other writers who later wrote Setswana books are Sol Plaatjie, S. S. Mafonyane, D. P. Moloto, L. D. Raditladi, M. O. M. Seboni, etc. Sol Plaatjie, a Rolong, was regarded as the foremost Tswana author of the period. He edited two newspapers from 1904- 1914 at Mafikeng and Kimberly i.e. 'Koranta ya Batswana' (The Batswana's newspaper), 'Tsala ya Batho' (The people's friend) and he wrote the book *Mhudi*. There were also a number of newspapers which were written in Setswana viz. *Lesedi*, *Tswelopele* and *Wamba*. These authors helped to preserve the Batswana culture by writing books (Lye & Murray 1980).

Under the influence of Western civilisation, the Batswana themselves became Christians, built churches and schools, and urged parents to send their children to school, encouraged their people to buy ploughs and other useful important goods, and to earn money for new needs by working as indicated by Schapera (1970:8). Since then, the Batswana have changed, and have become civilised and educated people.

Cultures change and different parts of a culture change at different speeds. In the past, there were no hospitals and people died from lack of proper medication. When people gave birth to twins, the children were killed because the people believed that this was a curse. They told people that they were born dead. People giving birth by bridge were left to die. But nowadays, because of the availability of hospitals and clinics, giving birth to a child is simple. There are children born by scissors, bridges and twins, triplets, etc.

Missionaries in Botswana aimed at attacking Setswana culture. Most missionaries despised and disliked Setswana customs, especially the most important ones such as bogadi (bride-wealth), rain making, polygamy, bogwera and bojale (male and female initiation schools). The Batswana, on the other hand, valued their customs and therefore wanted to protect and preserve them. This caused conflict between the Batswana and the missionaries (Tlou & Campbell 1994:134).

The missionaries wrongly believed that European culture was superior to all cultures of the world. Many missionaries believed that a true Christian was someone who adopted Western culture. To them Setswana culture was a sign of heathenism (Tlou & Campbell 1994:134).

The most important missionary group in the history of education of Botswana was the Methodists. There were, however, other missionaries like the Hermansburg Missionary Society. The missionaries were accepted and praised for having brought education and printed books for reading. The emphasis of education was primarily reading, writing and scripture. Christianity was used by missionaries as a group motive in their education system. A number of schools were started in Botswana, one after another (Tlou & Campbell 1994:137).

2.2.3 THE TIME OF TROUBLE (DIFAQANE)

According to Schapera (1953:15), from 1810 to 1840 there prevailed among the Batswana a period of chaos due to the successive onslaughts of invaders from the east, notably the MmaNtatisi (1822-3), Sebetwane's Kololo (1823-8) and Moselekatse's Tebele (1825-37). The Batswana tribes were forced to flee from their homes to which they did not return until the danger was past. This crisis, which the Sotho-speaking people called the Difaqane, led to chaos and disorder and much suffering among the Batswana.

The Batswana people of the Witwatersrand and the Bushveld areas north of the Vaal river, were hit hard first by the Difaqane invaders from the South, and then by the Ndebele of Mzilikazi from the East (Parson 1993:83).

The Difaqane was a period of chaos and trouble where many small groups established themselves as tribes. According to Lye & Murray (1980:24), “the Tswana people traditionally occupied the bulk of the high interior plateau country of South Africa, roughly framed by the Kalahari Desert on the west, the Drakensberg Mountains to the east, the Limpopo River to the North, and along the Orange River on the South-East and South-West. They spread out and conquered weaker people. This was in the 1820s when the whole of Southern Africa was affected by fighting (Tlou & Campbell 1994:103). Nations were destroyed or lost their food and cattle. They had to travel throughout the country, attacking whoever they met in an attempt to find food and a new home. The departure of the Ndebele in 1837 did not eliminate all external pressures on the Batswana.

The Basotho and the Batswana suffered the most as many groups were broken up and others fled across the Kalahari (Tlou & Campbell 1994:103). Soon the whole country between the Drakensburg and the Vaal River was in chaos.

For almost twenty years, the Batswana lived under war, or threat of war. Most tribes were being split and many were driven into desert. The Batswana people only returned in 1837 after the Matebele had been driven out of the Transvaal to Zimbabwe by the Boers.

The Difaqane had brought great devastation and turmoil to the Batswana. The Batswana were thus particularly vulnerable to the depredations of Mzilikazi's Ndebele and Sebetwane's Kololo. The Ndebele continued to pose a threat to the Northern Tswana for many years. The Boer intrusion brought some short-term relief for the Batswana and drove the Ndebele north of the Limpopo (Maylam 1986:119).

The Difaqane among the Batswana saw the development of a new type of centralised political state. The old Tswana kings, with exceptions such as Tau of the Barolong, were respected for their seniority in the royal lineage rather than as dynamic leaders in battle or in diplomacy with foreign states. The new kings had to be successful in battle and subtle in negotiation, as well as rich in cattle or trade goods, in order to attract the loyalty of new subjects. The king led his regiments in war, and appointed talented commoners as well as his royal relatives as his officers and chiefs (Parson 1993: 80).

Maragana and *Magagana*, two of the texts selected for this study, are set in the time of the Difaqane. These two texts bring out clearly what happened during those times. Chiefs were fighting over chieftainship. The chief who was strong in battle received the most respect. It is the Batswana culture that chieftainship is hereditary, but sometimes circumstances dictated that different rules be followed. Somebody would want to become a chief knowing that it does not belong to him. *Maragana* and *Magagana* give us a sense of how the Batswana and their institution of the chiefs react in times of difficulty, and therefore a sense of the Batswana cultural identity.

Towards the end of the 19th century the Rolong had divided under four brothers Ratlou, Seleka, Rrapulana and Tshidi. All four groups suffered disruption during the Difaqane. Throughout the Difaqane era missionaries continued to penetrate into the Batswana chiefdoms (Maylam 1986:121).

2.2.4 A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BATSWANA IN BOTSWANA

Before the Difaqane the lifestyle of different Batswana groups probably varied considerably. In wetter areas people were able to grow crops while in drier areas they depended more on hunting and collecting wild food. Such conditions favoured cattle-raising but were bad for crop production (Tlou & Campbell 1994: 71).

Botswana has been inhabited for thousands of years. Not much is known about the origins, social or political organisations of the early people. The origins of the current population, which is made up predominantly of the Batswana people, date primarily from the 18th century (Parson 1984:15).

The fighting of 1818 was caused by the expansion of the Zulu states under Shaka. Before the Difaqane in the 1820s the whole area between the Drakensberg and the coast, was populated by the Basotho and Batswana people. In the last months of 1824 the situation in South-Eastern Botswana changed. In about 1829, Sebitoane again raided the Bangwato, splitting the tribe (Tlou & Campbell 1994:102).

At the end of Difaqane the Batswana tribes were scattered. Some groups had taken refuge in the Kalahari. Others, sometimes broken into very small sections, had remained in the general area of their homeland (Tlou & Campbell 1994:115).

During those times Kgari was the chief of Botswana, succeeded by Sechele in 1829, then by Sekgoma 1 in 1849. The Batswana allowed missionaries to enter their land in 1820. They visited the Bakwena, Bakgatla, Banwato and Bakalanga under the leadership of David Livingstone.

The San were the native inhabitants of Botswana. In 1885, after repeated clashes between the Batswana and the Boers, Great Britain extended its protection over the land. The territory became the Bechuanaland Protectorate administered by Britain. The establishment of Britain government control meant that Bechuanaland became a part of the British empire.

During the 1914-1918, a major war, First World War, was fought between Germany and other European countries. Some of the chiefs in Bechuanaland, especially Kgama, supported the war by donating money for the war effort.

The Second World War (1939-1945) was also an important event in the history of Botswana, since some Batswana took part in it and, on their return, contributed much towards raising the aspirations of independence among the people (Tlou & Campbell, 1994:209). Important figures were people like the author L.D. Raditladi, who founded Bechuanaland's first political party. He also contributed much to the Batswana culture through his writing, and he is the author of one of the texts studied here, viz. *Dintshontsho tsa lorato* (1967). He also formed the Bechuanaland Protectorate Federal Party in Serowe. Another returned soldier was K.T. Motsete, founder and leader of the Bechuanaland People's Party (Tlou & Campbell 1994:223).

In 1961 Seretse Kgama became founder and leader of the Botswana Democratic Party. In 1965 elections were held leading to the independence. The country became independent of Great Britain as a republic on September 30, 1966. Botswana established its own currency in 1977 (Compton's 1993: 382).

The Republic of Botswana is bound on the north-east by Zimbabwe, in the south and south-east by South Africa, and on the west and north by Namibia. In the north, Botswana also shares a short border with Zambia.

Botswana is sparsely populated with an area of about 224,600 square miles. Much of both the south and the west is covered by the Kalahari Desert, inhabited only by aboriginal San (Bushmen). The climate of Botswana is generally a subtropical one (Compton's 1993: 382).

Most of the population is made up of Batswana, people of Bantu heritage. The official language is English, and Setswana is the most widely spoken African language. There are eight major Batswana tribes, each of which occupies its own separate territory with its own traditional chiefs. The Batswana have a rich tradition of folklore, music and dancing and their lives are strongly influenced by tribal institutions. The largest towns are Serowe and Francistown, and the capital and largest city is Gaborone (Compton's 1993 :382).

According to the tradition, the Batswana were at one time united under one chief but fission has been a common feature of their history. Most of the Batswana are living in Bechuanaland. The Batswana were also found in large numbers in the Orange Free State. Although the Batswana tribes made up the great majority of the people of Botswana, there were also important other elements in the population (Sillery 1971:14).

In 1920 separate native and European advisory councils were created (Parson 1984:22).

The new nationalism which everywhere in Africa resulted in independence, developed in the 1960s in Bechuanaland. After the Sharpsville shootings in 1960 and the ban of South African Political Parties many people fled to Botswana. Botswana became independent on 30 September 1966. People thought that it could not have an independent foreign policy because it was so economically dependent on South Africa. But Botswana worked out an independent foreign policy which has won the country pride and respect in the world (Tlou & Campbell 1994:256).

By 1979 Botswana had made some progress towards improving the lives of the Batswana. But they still had to raise the standard of living of all Batswana especially those in rural areas. Many Batswana are still poor mainly because there are not enough jobs and many

Batswana do not own much property (Tlou & Campbell 1994:238). Today Botswana is one of the most prosperous countries in Africa.

2.2.5 A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICA 1899-1948

During the chaos, Premier Schreiner of the Cape and president Steyn of Free State attempted to resolve matters by arranging a conference between Kruger and Milner. The conference started in 1899. After the conference Milner was not satisfied with the franchise. The role of gold carried considerable weight and became, in the course of time, the main cause of the Anglo-Boer War. The War lasted from 1899-1902 (Spies 1993:198).

In 1903, Sir Godfrey Lidge, commissioner for Native affairs in the office of the British High commissioner, was appointed chairman of the South African Native Affairs commission to work out "an acceptable native policy for all Southern Africa". In his report in 1905, he made proposals for the separation for black and white politically and territorially, leaving the substance of political power in the exclusive custody of white legislators and demarcating traditional land into small small pockets dispersed around extensive white areas (Ntloedibe 1995:20)

The South Africa Act of 1909 became the constitution of the Union of South Africa and embodied all the above bastions of native policy and colonial authority as well as the foundation for their constitution and perpetuation through legislation and proclamation with rural territorial segregation through the 1913 Native Land Act and the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act. (Ntloedibe 1995:22)

After the War, the reconstruction and unification of South Africa was a necessity (Spies 1993:219). Unity and disunity was an important issue from 1910-1924. ANC was founded in 1912. The National Party came into power in 1924 under the leadership of Hertzog with the support of the Labour Party. He pursued a national policy. In 1925 the meaning of 'Dutch' in the constitution was extended to include Afrikaans (Spies 1993:249).

In 1926 Hertzog introduced three 'Native' bills. The Union Native Bill proposed to establish a deliberative council of fifty Africans for the whole of South Africa, 35 of them elected. The Representation of Native in Parliament Bill aimed to remove African voters from the

common roll in the Cape and to provide Africans throughout the Union with seven white representatives in the House of Assembly with power to vote on issues affecting Africans. The Native Act Bill provided for the enlargement of the area allocated to Africans (Spies 1993:251).

In 1927 Joseph Gumede was elected as president to turn the ANC into a mass organisation. In 1929 the colour question was made the dominant issue in an election (Spies 1993:253).

In 1930 the women's Enfranchisement Act extended the vote to all women of European descent. The gold standard came into crisis in 1931-1932 because of big depression, by drought, and people moved to cities. By the beginning of 1933, South Africa was off the gold standard and Smuts and Roos entered into negotiations for coalition (Spies 1993:254).

In 1934, Hertzog published the 'Programme of Principles'. In 1936 Hertzog succeeded in passing the Native Act from 1938-1939 before the outbreak of World War II. The national income rose from £234,7 million to £394,8 million. Gold mining boomed (Spies 1993:256).

The British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, announced in 1939 that Britain was at War with Germany. He argued that South Africa should remain neutral. Immediately after resigning from the premiership, Hertzog began negotiations with Malan's party. A rally was held in 1939 designed for the public reconciliation between Hertzog and Malan (Spies 1993 :261).

In 1940 Hertzog's plan which advocated the rights of English-speakers, was rejected. After his defeat on the issue of equal rights for both language groups, Hertzog and Havenga resigned their parliamentary seats in December 1941. Hertzog died in 1942 (Spies 1992:262).

In 1942 Pirow and his parliamentary supporters stopped attending the National Party caucus and fought the 1943 election as a separate group (Spies 1993 : 2630).

During the decade which ended in 1946 the black urban population of South Africa nearly doubled. In 1948 the Labour Party did not contest a single seat in a working-class constituency. It had virtually conceded the political leadership of the white working-class to

the National Party. The National Party fought the 1948 election on the basis of its policy of Apartheid (Spies 1993:269).

2.2.6 THE APARTHEID REGIME IN SOUTH AFRICA

The results of the 1948 elections came as a great shock to General Smuts. Genl. J.B.M. Hertzog (1924-1939), leader of the Afrikaner Party, regained his status (Spies 1993: 271).

After coming into power in 1948 the National Party Government started putting apartheid into practice by means of a plethora of laws and executive actions. There were four core ideas of the apartheid system. Firstly, the population of South Africa comprised four “racial groups” white, coloured, Indian and African, each with its own inherent culture. Secondly, whites, as the civilised race, were entitled to have absolute control over the state. Thirdly, white interests should prevail over black interests. Fourthly, the white racial groups formed a single nation with Afrikaans and English speaking components, while Africans belonged to distinct nations (Thompson 1990:190).

Soon after coming to power in 1948, the government began to give effect to those ideas. The Population Registration Act (1950) provided the machinery to designate the racial category of every person. The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949) and the Immorality Act (1950) created legal boundaries between the races by making marriage and sexual relations illegal across the colour line. In waiting rooms and at railroad stations, different racial groups were not equal, and the parliament passed the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act to legalise such inequality (Thompson 1990:190).

The National Party used its majority in Parliament to eliminate the voting rights of Coloured and African people. In 1951 it passed an act by the ordinary legislative procedure to remove Coloured voters from the common electoral rolls. In 1955 Parliament passed more repressive acts. The only official countrywide African institution, the Native Representative Council was abolished. Strijdom died in 1958 and was succeeded as Prime Minister by Dr. H.F. Verwoerd. In 1960 countrywide celebrations were held to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Union of South Africa (Spies 1993: 277).

Between 1954 and 1956 blacks were removed from Sophiatown suburbs and the old Western Native Township, to be resettled in Soweto. The government started forming the Bantustans under the South African leadership. ANC and PAC were encouraged by Uhuru (Freedom) in other African States to press more strongly for freedom in South Africa (Parson 1993:301).

The government grouped the so-called native reserves into eight territories. Each such territory became a "homeland". The legislative framework foreshadowed by Verwoerd was completed in 1971 when the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act empowered the government to grant independence to any homeland. The government created a "self-governing" Transkei in 1976. Bophuthatswana followed in 1977, Venda in 1979 and Ciskei in 1981. As they were independent, their citizens were deprived of their South African Citizenship. Bophuthatswana have nineteen fragments, some hundreds of kilometers apart. The homelands depended on subsidies from Pretoria. Under apartheid the condition of the homelands continued to deteriorate (Thompson 1990:191).

Apartheid included rigid and increasingly sophisticated controls over all Black South Africans. By that time, the Black urban settlements of the war years had expanded into vast 'township' adjacent to the major White 'cities' - Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria and even Cape Town where previously few Africans had lived. By 1979 approximately 50% African children in the entire country including the Homelands were officially listed as attending school (Thompson 1990 : 193).

Most of the Batswana in South Africa were grouped together and given their own homeland, i.e. Bophuthatswana under the leadership of chief L.M. Mangope. In Bophuthatswana the Setswana language was often used to describe people's identity. This was very important for the Batswana because it gave them the right to know themselves. In creating the homeland system, the state ostensibly tried to reconcile tradition with modern administrative requirements. The latter were catered for by the establishment of tribal, regional and territorial bodies each with its own bureaucratic apparatus. This system of homelands recognised and encouraged traditional institutions (Lye & Murray 1980:146). The Batswana belonged to a homeland where they freely practised their culture. After 1994 things changed. The new government abolished the homelands and formed one nation. Looking back to homelands on the other hand, one may say this system was not proper because it encouraged

people to discriminate against other people who do not belong to their group and it was unworkable.

Apartheid forms the background against which *Pelo e ja serati* and *Dintshontsho tsa lorato* were published, where we find our main characters were oppressed by the Batswana culture. A person was not allowed to marry the partner of his/her choice. Foreigners were also discriminated against by the Batswana culture. People were not free to choose their own partners. They exercised their powers to bring out their cultural identity.

In 1960 the ANC and PAC announced plans for an antipass campaign. Demonstrations took place at Sharpsville township where 69 people were killed. The pressure was high and ANC and PAC were banned in 1960. In 1964 the government tightened up its control and tried to limit black residence in White areas to migrant workers only. The Bantu Homelands Development Corporation was set up in 1965. On 16 June 1976 Soweto students rebelled on because Afrikaans was to be enforced. Many people were killed. In 1977 Steve Biko was killed. Between 1978 and 1980 ANC worked out its strategy for South African liberation (Parson 1993:335).

Political violence, sanctions and strong oppression continued. In 1984 the government implemented a State of Emergency. The struggle continued until 1994 when Mandela was officially announced President of South Africa. Improvement could be seen and the lives of people changed.

The Batswana is a unique tribe and has a unique language and culture. Even if their language has different dialects, they are closely related. They have a common culture even though some of the Batswana tribes no longer practise their traditional culture.

It is true that every individual wants to be identified by his/her culture which can be transmitted to the upcoming generations. Cultural activities enable us to distinguish the Batswana people from other people in South Africa. I have decided to focus on five key elements, viz. their language, their cultural way of marriage, chieftaincy, the way they honour their ancestors and sorcery.

2.2.7 PRESENT- DAY LIVING CONDITIONS

In 1989 P.W. Botha suffered a stroke and was forced to retire. F.W. de Klerk took over as president and leader of the National Party. De Klerk was forced by the realities of power into a reassessment of the whole situation. He undertook to release political prisoners not guilty of common law crimes. He suspended all death sentences and initiated an inquiry into Capital punishment (Spies 1993:320). He also took the bold step of repealing the Population Registration and Group Area Acts, unbanning the ANC. On 11 February 1990 the most important political prisoner of them all, Nelson Mandela, was finally, unconditionally set free after 27 years in prison (Shillington 1995:431). In his opening address to Parliament on 2 February 1990, F.W. de Klerk announced lifting the state of emergency the unbanning of the ANC, the PAC and the Communist Party.

De Klerk and Mandela had given the country the breathing space which had not been available since 1960. The year 1990 was not a peaceful year. The unresolved problem of the political future of the homelands led to a successful coup in Ciskei, and an unsuccessful one in Bophuthatswana (Spies 1993:321).

To De Klerk, the most important consideration was to remain within his electoral mandate to break down the apartheid structures while working to protect the minorities (Spies 1993:321).

There followed four long years of intensive and dramatic negotiations between the various political parties, principally Mandela's ANC and de Klerk's National Party government as they thrashed out the guiding principles for a future constitution. The negotiations were played out against a background of rising violence in the country. Thousands lost their lives as rival political forces sought to fill the power vacuum being created by the weakness of transitional government (Shillington 1995:431).

In 1994 Mandela was declared president of South Africa together with De Klerk. Homelands were dissolved or abolished. People became free from oppression. They started moving to the urbanised areas or big cities in greater numbers, and that has been going on since 1994.

As South Africa went forward to its first non-racial elections in April 1994 the levels of wanton violence and politically-motivated murder were clearly storing up problems for the future. Combined with the high expectations of a long-oppressed electorate they presented Mandela and his ANC-dominated government with a massive task ahead. The democratic process in South Africa between February 1990 and April 1994 was not played out in isolation. Since 1990 the most of the rest of Africa has been politically transformed and one-party states have almost universally given way to multi-party systems of democracy (Shillington 1995:431).

During the past two decades, the majority of the Batswana moved to big cities. Many of them abandoned most of their important cultural practices and adopted the modern culture. Today one may say that the Batswana are not interested in their traditional culture and regard it as something of the past.

2.3. LANGUAGE AS A DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF BATSWANA IDENTITY

For a language to be maintained, it should be written down. The missionaries were the first people to reduce Setswana to writing. Their primary objective was to convert the Batswana to Christianity.

According to Billig (1995:14) "language is still commonly taken to be the central pillar of an ethnic group". This is true of the Batswana, who are proud of the language that they share. Each and every tribe is identified by its language which plays a vital role in its tradition.

The Batswana are identified by their language which is commonly known as Setswana, and which also indicates their culture. Wierbicka (1997) and Segers (1992:1) stress the point that "language is a symbolic guide to culture". It is true that language reflects the lifestyle of every culture. People speak different languages and the main criterion used to differentiate tribes is the languages they use. Bochner (1982:99) adds that "language is a form of human activity which makes it possible for human beings to think of past, present and future situations and make plans relating to them, to enable the individual to communicate with and stimulate responses from persons in his and other speech communities". Samovar (1972:3) supports the idea of Bochner by saying that "culture manifests itself both in patterns of language and thought and in forms of activity and behaviour". According to her it is important to compare

cultures through their key words. The Batswana regard Setswana as the language characteristic of them. It is a distinctive language and can be taught and transmitted to the younger generation. Samovar (1972:13) supports the idea of Segers and Wierbicka that “culture and language are inseparably intertwined”.

Language plays an important role in constructing a cultural identity. Words often carry a particular meaning that can only be recognised by those who share the same culture. The application of this language will determine into which culture the group or tribe falls. According to Wierbicka (1997), “there is a close link between the life of a society and the language they speak”. For Wierbicka words have a special meaning. “Words may indicate different meanings in each society and may thus ensure its culture”.

Nowadays, the Batswana seem to have lost their direction slightly. Their language has changed a bit under the influence of the Western civilization, i.e. some of the Batswana have moved into urban areas and are still doing so today. They have adopted different languages which spoil their language and in the end one cannot tell whether a person is a Motswana or not because he mixes different languages. A Motswana person can speak Zulu or Southern Sotho as if it is his/her mother tongue.

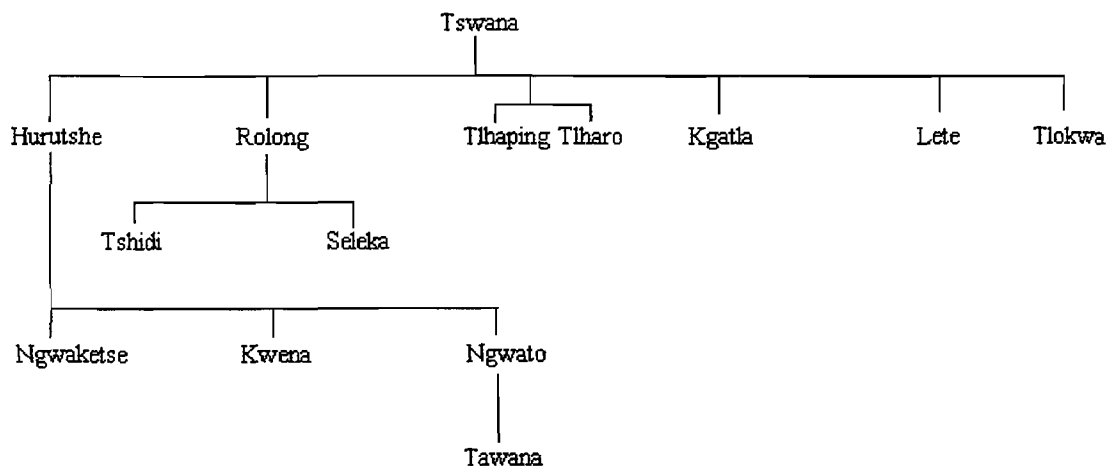
A tribe or nation that loses its language because of integration with other tribes or nations will ultimately lose part of its cultural identity. According to Schapera (1953:17), the “Tswana language, like other Bantu languages of South Africa, has such distinctive characteristics as a highly complex conjugation system for verbs, and use of suffixes to indicate the locative, diminutive, and augmentative forms of nouns”. “Tswana differs from other Bantu languages in having such features as a one-vowel system, the use of the immutable formative ke for the copula and the use of demonstrative pronouns in the indirect relative clause” (Schapera 1953:17).

I do agree with Schapera that Setswana differs from other Sotho languages in various details of phonetics, grammar and vocabulary. The Tswana language has no clicks, and uses the velar fricative instead of the aspirate, e.g. bogobe instead of bohobe. Distinctive of the Tswana language is that it uses the relative ending -ng, e.g. dirang.

According to Delanty (1995:106) a country may lose its identity because of many things. He indicates that the identity of Europe changed because of wars (Delanty 1995:107). He stresses the point that “Culture is substituted for the intellectual void of modernity and technological civilization”. Concerning our country one cannot say that apartheid has destroyed South Africa’s identity. The only thing that can be noticed is that it took time to unveil the cultural identity of South Africa, but its identity as Delanty indicates for Europe, can be found in art and literature. South African identity is based on several things, i.e. the flag and the languages. The education in schools is nationalised. Schools, radio, television, newspapers and parties are the main agents in injecting a national spirit of sameness. They are also the main agents of transmitting ideas of a nation’s cultural distinctiveness.

The Setswana language is made up of a number of dialects as indicated by Lye & Murray (1980:13) in the following diagram.

Diagram 2. SETSWANA DIALECTS



Most of the eastern people speak Setswana but with different dialects. This indicates that we can collectively be called Batswana, but we have different tones and pronunciation as we have the Rolong, the Hurutshe, the Kwena, etc. From these dialects, one can easily tell where a person comes from. The language spoken by people remains an important indicator of cultural identity.

Marriage is an important milestone in the lives of the individual as well as the group. In the next section this aspect of Batswana culture and as well as the other cultural aspects selected for this study, viz. values, behaviour, etc. will be discussed in order to determine what makes Batswana culture distinctive.

2.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SELECTED CULTURAL ASPECTS

The reasons for choosing the four aspects is that they deal with four important dimensions or facets of culture, i.e. relation to authority, the relationship between individual and society, social inequality, and ways of dealing with uncertainty.

The Batswana like to practise or maintain their cultural practices. Chieftainship and ancestors are interconnected because the Batswana believe that chieftainship is instituted by the ancestors. For marriage to be successful, the Batswana believe, it must be graced by the ancestors. Witchcraft and traditional healing are believed to be inherited from the ancestors. Even the chief, before he is placed on the throne, must be strengthened by the traditional healer. The Batswana are fond of their culture and believe strongly that ancestors can help them and bring success to their lives.

The four aspects of culture are closely intertwined. Yet the relationship with others can be seen clearly in the Batswana views about marriage.

2.5. MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

2.5.1. THE NATURE OF MARRIAGE

Marriage among the Batswana involves many rituals/customs, viz. lobola, wedding ceremonies, polygamy and seantlo.

Marriage shows how family ties are valued and also indicates the relation with the other gender and with others in general within the community as a whole. Marriage builds relationships with others and indicates the relationship with foreigners. If you are not a Motswana, you are regarded as a foreigner and you cannot be married to a Motswana.

The way the Batswana arrange their marriage is unique. From birth the individual is involved in a continuous process of growing participation in society which includes the transmission of values and attitudes. Marriage customs and marriage are part of that.

Marriage plays a major role in Batswana life. It is an essential concern of the parents to see that their sons and daughters get married. They must take the initiative in their children's marriage.

According to a long established definition, marriage is the stable union of a man and a woman for procreation. This proper and intrinsic destination of marriage, which appears to be fully realised by the Batswana even in our age, has its roots in and flows from the very formation and nature of the two human beings, the male and the female, who join as partners in marriage.

The Batswana as a unique society do not want to mix their culture with other cultures. In the past, it was not possible for a Motswana to marry a person who was not a Motswana. This was regarded as a sinful act which would spoil their culture. This is also supported by Lekhela and Ntsime as quoted by Sabiti (1994:17): "In traditional Setswana society, marriage between a Motswana damsel born in a particular ward to a complete stranger was taboo. Acceptable matrimonial unions were those in which the bride and her spouse had common family or clan ties so that not only the spouses, but the parents as well belonged to the same clan. The couple would naturally share the heritage of common customs and traditions". A counter example is indicated by Sol Plaatje (as quoted by Lye and Murray, 1980:23) who married a Xhosa woman. In my opinion, marrying a Xhosa woman does not mean that he went against his custom, but rather that he meant to build a good relationship between the Batswana and foreigners. He was aware of the language problem, but they used a common language to understand each other. Today intermarriage is commonly practised among the tribes.

Marriage plays a central role in the life of each and every person. Through marriage, children are born, nurtured and educated. It is the mother and father who must see that children get a good education in order to lead a meaningful life. Culturally, the parents must teach children

good behaviour, how to greet and pay respect to others. Parents must see to it that their children behave well so that life can make sense to them.

Nowadays there are no hard rules for marriage, the family you are marrying into, behaviour or respect or any of those conventional customs. Today young couples generally live together for some time before lobola is actually transferred but their union is not legally complete until lobola has been paid. This legal union establishes certain rights and duties on both sides. Schapera (1977:148) indicates that "as between husband and wife, it involves community of daily life and economic interests, and mutual services of various other kinds". He further says that marriage creates a series of reciprocal obligations between the wife and her husband's people, and between the husband and his wife's people.

2.5.2. CONDITIONS FOR MARRIAGE

Before marriage can take place, the Batswana have various conditions that must be fulfilled . Boys are allowed to marry the daughter of a maternal uncle. In this regard Schapera (1977:128) says : "A man's cousin is his wife". This means that a man is free to marry his maternal uncle's daughter because Tswana culture allows it. Even if he does not marry her, he has the right to behave very freely towards her.

The important thing about this rule is that when the bridegroom pays lobola, it falls back to his family. They don't lose anything. The Batswana also have a saying which says : Ngwana wa ga Malome, nnyale, dikgomo di boele sakeng, meaning "Child of my paternal uncle, marry me, so that the cattle can return to our kraal". This was very important in the life of the Batswana, especially in the past.

The Batswana preferred marriage with a cross-cousin who is the daughter of a maternal uncle or paternal aunt. The Batswana believed that the girl selected would be intimately known to the boy's people, and as close relatives, both she and her husband would be more tolerant of each other's conduct. The marriage would bind the two families together even more closely than before and ensure increased harmony and co-operation. Nowadays a man is free to marry the girl of his choice, irrespective of colour, tribe or nationality.

Most people seem to have taken much trouble to find suitable mates for their children. For the Batswana, choosing a wife is very important and they have to be very careful. According to Schapera (1948:40), “the bride’s parents should be of good character and respectable ancestry, and a point emphasised by all informants, free from any suspicion of practising sorcery”.

Another criterion for choosing is that the choice of a mate was regulated partly by kinship, but a man’s choice of a wife is limited to some extent by relationship. He is not allowed to marry his own sister, or half sister, father’s sister or mother’s sister. This is not allowed by the Batswana tradition.

2.5.3. INITIATION

Before marriage, boys and girls have to pass through initiation school which confers upon them the status of adults. They should also be members of a regiment. The Batswana regard this school as very essential because it prepares young men and women for life and teaches them their customs and culture.

Today young people refuse to go to this school because they don’t see its importance. They enter into marriage without being taught the married life, and this leads to many divorces. They don’t know how to handle their marriage and they don’t have patience. Today, most of the Batswana send their children to hospitals to be circumcised. To them, initiation school is just a waste of time. For young people in the past that was the only school they could attend because there were no schools like today. This was very important to them. But today’s generation is no longer interested in such schools. They do not even know them. They want to change. In the past people could not get married until they had been initiated into membership of an age-regiment. Today young men tell their parents that they want to marry without being first involved in a regiment. Young women, however, are no longer bound to wait for the husband to go to the initiation school and be involved in the regiment first. They are both free to marry when they feel the time is right.

Initiation was the most important ceremonial occasion in the life of the Batswana. They regard initiation as the transition from boyhood into manhood and girlhood into womanhood with all its privileges and responsibilities. According to the Batswana culture, a man who had

not passed through initiation was always regarded as a boy, no matter how old he might be. He was denied the right to sit or eat with other men or to take part in tribal discussions, and he was not allowed to marry (Schapera 1977:106).

Eligible boys were initiated simultaneously in groups and kept in one or more special camps away from all the villages for about three months. This was kept a secret from women and all other non-initiates. A penalty of severe assault or death was applied to those who came too near to the camp as this was highly secret. At the camp the boys were firstly circumcised and then taught a number of secret songs, to honour, obey, and support the chief; to be ready to endure hardships and even death for the sake of the tribe, to be united as a regiment and help one another, to value cattle as the principal source of livelihood, to attend the Kgotla regularly as this was the place of men. They were taught to obey old people and to abandon all boyish practices. They were taught sexual manners and the duty of procreation and other rules of conduct in married life. They were also taught about the danger of having intercourse with 'unclean' women. They were further taught tribal traditions and religious beliefs.

They were then given their first task to perform as a regiment, i.e. to kill a lion or to hunt and bring something to the chief. After this they were regarded as proper men, and were now free to marry. The girls were taught how to take care of their family and how to behave when married.

2.5.4. NEGOTIATIONS - ROLE OF THE PARENTS

Marriage in the Batswana culture is regarded as an important aspect of life. Before marriage, a woman is controlled by the authority of her father or guardian, while after marriage, she comes under the control of her husband and, on his death, under some other male member of his family. The family among the Tswana people was formed or based on marriage. The two families entered into a marriage contract. They arranged everything for the bride and the bridegroom. The parents of the bride and of the groom would meet and negotiate the issue of lobola and if an agreement was reached, they discussed the day the lobola would be paid and the day the wedding should take place. This is very important because for the Batswana no marriage can take place without lobola. Today lobola is not taken as seriously as in traditional times. Today people go to the extent of helping the boy with the lobola. Schapera (1977:125) writes that "the main essentials of the marriage contract among the Tswana are

the mutual agreement between the two families concerned, as reflected in the formalities of betrothal and the transfer of certain livestock, generally cattle, to the bride's family by the family of the bridegroom”.

2.5.5. BETROTHAL

The Batswana still follow the style of the Batswana marriage. The husband's parents first consult the parents of the wife. They come to an agreement about lobola. After paying lobola, they make arrangements for the marriage ceremony.

In the olden days, betrothals were fairly common. It happened that a man would bespeak as his son's future wife a girl who was still very young or who might even not yet have been born. This was known as “go tlhoma letlhokwa” (to place a stalk of grass) or “go baya monwana” i.e. ‘to put down a finger’. In the case of an unborn girl, “go opa mpa” (to strike a womb) was practised, especially between close relatives (Schapera 1977:130). This type of betrothal is nowadays not practised. People believe in the Tswana proverb that says :“Pelo e ja serati” i.e. ‘a loving heart knows no bounds’.

According to Schapera (1977), if the girl's parents agreed to the match, the boy's father would send them a beast to be slaughtered. The peritoneum (lomipi) is hung round the neck of the girl, or round the neck of the woman whose unborn daughter was being bespoken. The boy's people would now from time to time send various gifts to the girl and her people, such as clothing, milk and meat. The engagement ceremony would then indicate the formal ratification of the betrothal. Today, this is not happening. The only thing they do is to buy the baby's clothes when the child is born.

Infant betrothal is no longer practised. Men and women choose their mates without the concern of the parents. No one is forced to be involved in a marriage he/she doesn't approve of.

The Batswana believed that after the betrothal, the wedding should be delayed until the boy and the girl had been initiated into their regiments. After the initiation a feast was then held at the girl's home, after which the boy came there in the evenings and stayed with her in a hut specially set aside for them, returning by day to his parents' home. This was usually

continued until a child was born. The woman was then taken formally to live at her husband's home.

In the olden days, the death of an engaged person did not necessarily break the bond between the two families. If the girl died, her parents were expected to give her fiancé a younger sister or some other relative to marry instead, and if the boy died, the girl would be married to his younger brother and the children she bore him were considered to be the legal offspring of her original fiancé.

Today, if the girl's fiancé dies, she returns to her parents' home and no further arrangements are made.

2.5.6. LOBOLA

When the husband has paid lobola, it means he is married even if they have not signed a contract and no marriage certificate has been issued. Schapera (1977:138) writes that "according to the Tswana custom, no marriage is regarded as complete unless lobola has been given by the husband's people to the wife's people". Kalule-Sabiti (1994:24) adds to the idea of Schapera that "traditionally, bride's wealth is an important part of African marriage". He further states that it was generally meant to be one part of the contractual aspects of marriage and could be paid either in cash or in kind. Lobola is regarded as a token of appreciation for the parents' kindness in now allowing their son to marry her or thanksgiving to the wife's parents for the care they have spent in raising their child. Lobola is regarded as a registration of the marriage. Marriage with cattle is deeply rooted in the Tswana tradition.

According to the Batswana culture, marriage without lobola is meaningless. No one will regard you as a married man or married woman. For the Batswana, you will remain a boy or a girl forever until you pay lobola. This was their way of showing or indicating that you are married. Even today this is still practised.

Traditionally, lobola had to be paid in the form of cattle. It must be female cattle, heifers or cows, and they must be very young. The number of the cattle must be an even number. If it is an odd number, it means that the lobola is not sufficient, they have to make it even. Lobola must be paid, and no installments are allowed. Nowadays people do not care about this

tradition: money controls everything, even lobola. The use of money for paying lobola was not regarded as important because the Batswana strongly believe that such a marriage will not last. Lye and Murray (1980:112) stress the point that “the child belongs to the cattle”, meaning that if lobola cattle have not passed, the mother is not properly married and the child remains with its mother's father. But today, lobola is no longer regarded as important. The new generation takes it as buying a person. That is why today some of them marry without transferring lobola cattle to the wife's parents. The girls also help the boy to pay lobola.

Another important practice of the Batswana about lobola is that the wife's brother also has the right to claim the lobola or be given one of the lobola cattle. According to Batswana law, the wife's brother must be given one head of the cattle from the bogadi cattle. This is a sign that he is given the right to be the responsible uncle when his sister's children marry or in anything else.

Although the institution of traditional marriage still persists, the offer of cattle as lobola today has been largely substituted by cash payment.

I agree with Hofstede (1991:8) that “what we consider important, is what we want for ourselves”. Concerning marriage, the Batswana regarded cultural marriage as essential. The most important aspect in their marriage was lobola. Seemingly marriage could not take place without lobola, and the Batswana believed that such a marriage would not last long. According to Sabiti (1994:24), “the offer of brides wealth to the parents or the prospective in-laws is made in good faith by the parents of the young man”. Today marriage, according to the Batswana has lost its dignity, because they believe it is not culturally organised.

2.5.7. WEDDING CEREMONIES

The traditional wedding of the Batswana was very simple and inexpensive. No clothes were bought. They used lomipi (the peritoneum) of one of the animals that had been slaughtered and hung it around the neck of the wife. The day was spent with great joy, eating, drinking, singing and dancing. Culturally, according to the Batswana, every person was expected to enter the world of matrimony and lobola should be paid to complete the marriage.

The procedure of the Batswana cultural marriage was similar to that in arranging a betrothal. Initially when the time was right for the wedding, the boy's people would send messengers to obtain the consent of the girl's people. First men, then women would go and ask for 'sego sa metsi' (the bride). If both sets of parents came to an agreement, preparations for the wedding feast began. On the appointed day, the lobola would also be transferred. Similar feasts were held at the girl and the boy's home. The boy would sleep with the girl at the home of the parents in a small hut set aside for them at the back of her mother's homestead (Schapera 1977:136).

Today, since the introduction of the Western civilization, and especially Christianity, these ceremonies have in most tribes and also in the Batswana, been considerably modified. The arrangement of the wedding ceremony is still similar to that of the olden days, but they use expensive wedding dresses. The marriage takes place in the church and a marriage certificate is issued.

2.5.8. DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF A MAN AND A WIFE

It is fairly common for the Batswana to allocate tasks for the man and wife and most importantly to scrutinise their conduct. The wife according to the Batswana culture is expected to be humble and respectful, to work hard and in effect to be the general servant of the household. According to Schapera (1977:149) "in most cases so long as she does not offend her relatives in-law they give her little real trouble, and they may even take her part should her husband ill-treat or neglect her".

The man should honour his wife, assist her at work, give her occasional gifts of meat and other forms of food, and invite her to feasts or other celebrations in which he plays a principal part. All this he does without any legal compulsion. If he fails to render such services he is regarded as worthless and bad.

2.5.9. DIVORCE

Divorce in Batswana cultural marriages was rare. In tribal law the main grounds for divorce are a husband's sorcery, cruelty or nonsupport, and a wife's sorcery, barrenness, desertion, or failure to perform her domestic duties.

A divorced woman returns to her parental home, and can then be married again. Her children if still young, accompany her, but when old enough return to their father. The wife is given half of the household property and, if she is the injured party, some cattle as well.

Today when people are divorced, there is a possibility that the children may remain with the father or their mother. The main grounds for divorce today is infertility, or adultery or the breakdown of the marriage. But today divorce is very common among the Batswana in towns and cities. Modern marriages are not properly arranged. People are not taught the rules of marriage.

2.5.10. CHANGES IN THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

Today there are many changes in the Batswana marriage customs. People are no longer interested in initiation school. They believe that it is a waste of time and that it affects their life negatively as it is not always properly done. Western civilization regarded initiation as most immoral and did all that it could to stamp it out. Progressive chiefs further felt that it interfered with the Western religion and education. Today circumcision which was done during the period of initiation schools, is done in hospitals. People don't have to be involved in initiation and regiments before they can marry.

Today the Batswana have abandoned marriage to a paternal uncle's daughter. The youngsters believe the choice of a mate lies with them. The younger people are the ones who are going to live with the woman or man. They are the ones who are going to face the consequences if anything goes wrong. The parents are no longer responsible for choosing a wife for a man. They also abandoned 'go tlhoma letlhokwa' (to plant a stalk of grass). The traditional betrothal and its ceremonies are no longer important to the Batswana.

In the Batswana cultural marriage, no certificate was issued. They believed that when lobola had been paid, the marriage was complete. But today if the marriage certificate is not issued, the marriage is regarded as not complete. Women cannot even claim the household property if the husband divorces them because they are not legally married.

The Batswana were also involved in seantlo and polygamy. Even though seantlo and polygamy is today seen as destructive and immoral, the Batswana still believe that it is their cultural way of life. They bring out the cultural identity of the Batswana.

2.5.11. SEANTLO (literally, “to creep into someone's house”)

According to Batswana custom, no family should be left alone suffering and living in hunger. The husband's family should provide the family with help. If the husband or wife dies, he or she should be provided with another wife or husband if there is a suitable unmarried relative available. Such a relative would be given directly as seantlo to the bereaved husband or wife. The widower does not have to pay any additional lobola for the seantlo. The same applies to the widow. Lye and Murray (1980:112) also stress the tradition of levirate namely that “a widow was incorporated into the household of a junior kinsman of her husband, and any children she subsequently bore were still regarded as belonging to the dead man”.

Nowadays, the majority of the Batswana have abandoned this kind of marriage. The person concerned feels very humiliated and people are no longer interested in this type of marriage. He or she must be free to choose a wife or husband of his/her choice who is not a relative. They think that this is the beginning of problems which will always leave you in agony. This kind of marriage generally turns out to be a failure because of the quarrels that take place nearly every day.

Seantlo and polygamy have a similar effect. Being involved in polygamy means that a husband wants to increase his family and his name.

2.5.12. POLYGAMY

Polygamy is an important cultural custom that the Batswana commonly practised in the past. Today it is rare that a household is based upon a polygamous family. In the past, not all men had more than one wife. This was seen only among the chiefs, their relatives, important headmen and other prominent or wealthy people.

Polygamy played a part in the life of the Batswana but nowadays it probably no longer works because life is very expensive. Attention is not given to the wives equally, and this in the end causes jealousy and fights. Western civilization forced many Batswana to get rid of some of

these cultural practices. According to Lye and Murray (1980:112), “wealthy men were able to marry many wives”. It kept women in a state of perpetual subjection, and that led to endless control over women and their children. Today the status of women has changed. They get equal jobs and equal salaries.

The main aim of polygamy according to the Tswana culture, one may say, was not only to have many wives, but also to increase the family. Today polygamy is rare. The missionaries condemned polygamy and insisted that people marry only one wife. Poverty and economic pressure persuaded people to marry only one wife. The Batswana no longer practise polygamy, but tribes like the Pedi, Tsonga, Venda and others are still practising polygamy.

To the Batswana marriage is still an important marker of their cultural identity. The procedures that were followed, that is the betrothal, the transfer of the cattle, initiation and regiments, the role played by the parents, were an indication the Batswana as a united society who loved their culture. It resulted in good relationships and mutual respect, including foreigners. But today the Batswana do not follow their marriage customs. They prefer modern marriage customs. The marriage relationship will get rid of tribal division and people will belong together. There will be no discrimination of others if the Batswana involve themselves with foreigners in marriage.

In every action they undertake, the Batswana involve the ancestors. They put their trust in ancestors in everything they do. They believe that for a marriage to be successful, it must be graced by the ancestors. The Batswana believe strongly in their ancestors. The ancestors take control over everything, marriage and even the chiefs. They believe that if the ancestors don't like a marriage it cannot take place. If a chief is successful it is because of the ancestors. The ancestors' duty is to protect marriages and to secure the chief in his reign.

Ancestors are the hope of every tribe or nation. They all believe strongly in them because they are their grandparents.

2.6. ANCESTORS

Each and every ethnic group has its own customs and beliefs. The Batswana believe that people who pass away can still help them. They believe that ancestors are there. The idea

behind the ancestors is nothing sacred, it is rather a social recognition of the fact that the dead man or woman has acquired a new status and that, though he/she is physically separated from the rest of his/her community, he/she is still one with it, participating in its councils and determining all its successes or misfortunes.

The Batswana take an active interest in the welfare of their living descendants. They believe that the life of a person is protected by the ancestors, whether you are in danger or whether you are sick. Lye and Murray (1980:124) stress the point that "should they repudiate the ancestors, they may be sharply reminded of them by the mystical capacity of the badimo to inflict illness or misfortune". The ancestors are very important and they play a great role in our lives.

They can come to you in a dream or send a message with another person. They can instruct you to do something and if you don't do it, the consequences of disobedience will affect only the person concerned. The offender must therefore often undergo a special purification ceremony to do away with the evil effects believed to follow upon his violation.

In times of drought people believe that the ancestors can help to bring them rain. They perform rituals by mixing medicines with water, and after this, they take small boys to spray that medicine in the fields. This is regarded as 'go tlapisa naga' (cleaning of the field). After the cleaning has been completed, they gather in the lekgotla and call the word rain three times. When the process is complete, the rain falls. They will then know that the ancestors have answered them. They can now plough the fields and plant food.

Today's generation finds it hard to believe that dead people can make rain. Because they are educated, they believe that the meteorologists can predict rain much more accurately.

Western civilization brought some doubts in the existence of the ancestors. The only person in whom we should believe is God. But ancestors are traditionally important to black people. They trust in them because they think ancestors are their saviours and they protect them and give them food. I still believe that the ancestors do exist and that they have a great influence on the life of the Batswana. Before they do anything, they ask help from their ancestors.

Young generations are also taught by their parents that the ancestors are very important because they are their forefathers.

Witchcraft is an important aspect of the Batswana culture. Even though witchcraft can be regarded as a bad thing, it still plays an important role in maintaining the Batswana cultural identity. It reveals the Batswana culture by practising it.

2.7. WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

The Batswana obey and honour their traditional culture, which also includes witchcraft and traditional healing. They learn what their ancestors were doing in as far as witchcraft is concerned. In that way they will be in a position to choose, select and practise what is important in witchcraft, e.g. medicines which can be used to heal the sick.

If someone is ill, some of the Batswana believe even today that he is bewitched. To avoid witchcraft, they usually call a traditional doctor to strengthen or protect their family with medicinal charms. Every family has its own traditional healer. Whenever they encounter a problem, they consult that traditional doctor.

Witchcraft is an important aspect of the life of the Batswana and its practice still persists strongly today. Almost everybody still believes in witchcraft, and should a person die or fall ill, or suffer some misfortune, people believe that he has been poisoned by means of witchcraft. Christianity may have provided the Batswana with an acceptable substitute for their old religion, but according to Schapera (1970:130) "it had apparently not been able to convince them that their faith was idle superstition". The churches also condemned the use of magic but this was a failure and instead the Batswana resorted to traditional doctors. Even though Western medicine plays a big role in healing people, the Batswana still practise witchcraft today.

The Batswana believe that witch-doctors can protect them. They use these doctors for their livestock and fields, or to obtain protective charms for homes and cattle-kraals, cars, wedding ceremonies, etc. Sorcerers are capable of making a person mad, or cry like a cow, or make you steal forever. In the past, people convicted of witchcraft were often put to death. But

convicted sorcerers, if they fail to undo their victim, were sometimes fined or banished from their homes.

Usually witches practise their work during the night or in darkness. It is believed that its frightening to see them in the middle of the night. They wear fingers of people and smear their eyes with black medicines. Sometimes they say witches are capable of changing themselves into something like donkeys, pigs, etc. if you happen to see them.

Witches are believed to possess familiars. This is their most typical and important characteristic. The familiars, i.e. animals in the form of donkeys, owls and tokoloshi, go to the graveyard to take a dead person so that they can turn him/her into a tokoloshi. For them to take this person is very simple because they use the so-called leselo (grass basin) to bring him out. These animals viz. donkeys, owls or tokoloshi are used to annoy people and to get things their masters cannot get for themselves. They are also sent on mischievous errands to break property, frighten people by throwing stones and give adults nightmares or dreadful dreams. Schapera (1953:65) writes that "sorcerers often use magic maliciously to injure people or damage their property".

Witches are believed to have the power of rendering themselves invisible. By means of special medicines or magic, they can put ordinary people to sleep and fly wherever they wish. They visit their friends in different parts of the country, or they gather in some places where they dance and sing naked. According to the Batswana there are two types of witches, i.e. witches who can poison or kill you, and witches who just gather during the night and practise their songs without doing people any harm.

The Batswana have a firm, deeply-rooted belief in the existence of sorcery and sorcerers. The most important characteristics of sorcerers is that they are believed to use medicines. They differ from doctors in that they use their knowledge and powers for harm, for antisocial ends. Sorcery is an affair of the darkness (Schapera 1953:65).

If a person has a talent, it is not good to hide it because it is not going to help and no one will benefit from it. Sorcery can be regarded as the art of practising magic. But people misuse this talent, and they gain nothing from it. The main thing which controls them is jealousy. If they

are able to open the doors of the houses during the night, why can't they open the banks and shops and make themselves rich and steal the groceries from the shops. Witchcraft is an unhealthy thing that dooms our future. Witchcraft should be prohibited because this is a futile exercise. Sorcerers should be punished because they are invisible murderers. But on the other hand, we can say sorcerers are also human beings and have the right to be accepted as they are. We can live with them and lead a normal life.

Witchcraft is one of the Batswana cultural practices which they respect most. One may conclude that even if witchcraft is a distinctive aspect of the Batswana culture, it is something that makes a person feel dirty and plants jealousy in a person's heart and ruins everything.

Chieftainship is also regarded as an important aspect of Batswana culture. For the Batswana, this gives them a sense of self-respect and of belonging in knowing their status in society.

2.8. CHIEFTAINSHIP

Every tribe has a traditional leader, and that leader is the chief. It is the chief who must see to it that the administration of his tribe runs smoothly, that tribal facilities are developed, for example schools. A chief can be regarded as the cultural hero of the tribe. He is a role model for the tribe and respect should be paid to him. In times of war, the chief is expected to lead his regiment and show bravery to his tribe. The role the chief plays within the tribe and within the culture is considered to be socially essential. The chief as the leader of the tribe should satisfy the needs of the tribe and support them. He should also protect them against their enemies and lead them during the battle (Schapera 1970:7).

Chieftainship is an important aspect of the Batswana culture. They are proud of having a chief as their leader who can lead them through life and show them how to deal with their cultural values, respect and good behaviour. In this regard Schapera (1977:53) writes that "the administrative system of the Tswana is founded upon the principle of delegated responsibility". The chief as the leader, is the one who is responsible for his tribe and its needs, finally supporting them in whatever they do.

Every tribe has its own chief or a headman even today. At the head of the whole tribe is the chief and he is assisted by various councils, local divisions within the tribe, i.e. heads of districts, villages and the wards and their headmen. According to Roberts (1985:77), "it is clear from many accounts that the authority of Tswana rulers was variable, and it depended on personal ascendancy as well as upon tenure of the office of the chief". This indicates that the chief exercised his powers within the framework of customs and laws of the Batswana. The ruler administers his people through hereditary headmen, each of whom had charge of a defined residential area and supervised the herding and farming activities within that area.

The chief is always treated with great respect. The tribe members strongly believe that he can lead his people through life, feed them when they are hungry, console them when their hearts are broken, and so on. The chief should in turn respect his people and he will also be respected.

Nowadays the succession to office is no longer important. Today the tribe can choose any person to become chief as long as he belongs to the royal family. The chieftainship is hereditary in the male line, passing normally from father to eldest son. This is supported by Roberts (1985:76), stating that "the office of ruler ideally devolved from father to eldest son". The chief is never elected, but as a rule, the chief succeeds automatically to his office by right of birth. Comaroff (1974:37) and Schapera (1977:53) write that: "A chief is chief because he is born to it". The real chief has to wear a leopard skin on his shoulders and this indicates that he is the real one. Once installed, he rules until his death. Comaroff also mentions that disputes do arise over succession to office. I agree with him. Traditionally when the chief was not fit to rule his tribe, he was killed and a legitimate chief had to take his place.

Concerning Tswana politics, it is essential to recognise the features which distinguish the Tswana from many other African societies. By the presence of governmental arrangements, in the shape of kingship, the Batswana have a unique arrangement. It must be hereditary or the chief's son must become the successor of his father. If you are not a chief's biological son, the leopard skin is not put over your shoulder, but it is put under your feet to show that you are not the legitimate chief.

The chief becomes strong because of the support he gets from the tribe. All members are under the authority of the chief. There are tribal councils whom the chief consults more often to get advice, and whose opinions play an important part in shaping his conduct of tribal affairs.

If the chief dies without leaving a son, his office immediately passes to his eldest brother. The chief's son by a concubine does not have the right to succeed, even if there are no legitimate descendants. He cannot rule because chieftainship does not rightfully belong to him. According to Tswana culture this is not proper and it is highly unacceptable. The important value of the Batswana culture is that the right person should rule (Schapera 1977:55).

When the chief dies, the royal house informs all its members and the tribe. The news is also reported to the chiefs of the neighbouring tribes so that they can offer their condolences. Traditionally, the chief was buried in the great cattle-kraal and as was customary in most tribes one of his principal assistants was killed and buried in the same grave to carry his sandals. The grave was then sprinkled with medicines so that no enemy could get to his corpse and use it to bewitch the people. The chief must not be alone in his grave. The person killed is regarded as the chief's bodyguard. Today the chief is buried alone. (Schapera 1977:59).

The announcement of the death of the chief to the tribe is very important because every person deserves to know because it is their chief. The killing of the principal assistant was only acceptable in the past but not today. I think that rule oppressed the people because innocent people were killed without any valid reason.

Traditionally the chief was inaugurated by the paramount chief, but nowadays the chief can be nominated by the government, although this is not according to our customs. During his installation the chief is given a sacred medicine horn and he must use it for his protection. He is then formally given the leopard skin as a symbol of chieftainship. This is followed by a ceremony where people eat and dance with joy (Schapera 1977:60).

2.8.1 THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF

The Batswana like other tribes are led by chiefs in all tribal affairs. The chief as the leader of the tribe knows the needs of his people precisely. What is important to him, is also important to the tribe. According to Schapera (1970:7), the chief as the head of the tribe has the following duties :

- He is responsible for organising initiation ceremonies.
- He alone has the right to convene tribal meetings, arrange tribal ceremonies, and impose the supreme penalties of death and banishment.
- He must watch over the interests of his people and keep himself informed of tribal affairs generally.
- He has to look after the tribe's welfare and protect it.
- As the executive head of the tribe, nothing of any importance can be done without his knowledge and authority.
- He must decide upon and organise any public works, and see that they are carried out by the regiments or some other body.
- All strangers coming to the tribe, whether as visitors, refugees, traders or in any other capacity, must be reported to him at his kgotla, and their presence accounted for.
- He is further responsible for maintaining law and order throughout the tribe.
- He is the supreme judge of the tribe, whose decision is final.
- He has to play a role in marriage and in disposing of land.

Today things have changed but still the chief has to perform some of the duties, viz. to convene tribal meetings, arrange tribal ceremonies, nothing of importance can be done without his knowledge and he is responsible for maintaining law and order throughout the tribe. Even though today's young people do not respect the chief like in the past, he still has a say in the tribe, because no tribe can function well without a chief.

Since tribal punishment has been prohibited, this makes the task of the chief very difficult. He is unable to solve tribal problems. People are no longer afraid of punishment. The courts are responsible for this. I think the chief has all the power as head of the tribe and must be given the chance to solve tribal disputes accordingly.

2.9. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I have noticed that all Batswana, modern or traditional, have the same problems concerning culture. According to Hofstede (1991:13), “all societies modern or traditional, face the same basic problems, only the answers differ”. People have less respect for others, for foreigners, for nature and for authority.

In the past the Batswana relied upon their culture and did not want to mix their culture with others. They had their own way of arranging marriage. The Batswana custom of bogadi or lobola is different from other tribes. The Batswana pay four cattle as lobola unlike the Xhosas. The Xhosas pay more cattle e.g. twelve to twenty cattle. They steal the wife before arranging the marriage. A Motswana wife cannot go to her parents-in-law or her husband before the marriage arrangements have been completed. I regard this as an indication or sign of what makes the Batswana unique. One can use this as a mark that distinguishes the Batswana from other tribes. The way they handle their marriage customs makes them feel special about their culture and their cultural identity. Formerly, no children were born outside marriage but today children are there even if no marriage arrangements have been made at all. People feel that you can get old without having a child while waiting for marriage. This caused people to lose their culture. It was regarded as extremely important that a Motswana man marry a Motswana woman. But from my observation today, modern Batswana are not in favour of their culture. Irregular marriages are now practised. The youth want to be identified as Batswana but they no longer want to practise their culture. They regard it as totally outdated and a waste of time. They want to imitate the lifestyle and the way of thinking of the Western society. Some, however, continue to stick to their own cultural ways.

According to Hofstede (1991:11), “most nations are composed of culturally different regions or ethnic or religious and language groups”. He also stresses the point that the passport one holds should identify his nation. It is often the only feasible criterion for classification. The Batswana are identified by their language, the way they handle their ancestors, their chiefs and their marriage customs.

Traditionally or in the past the Batswana were very fond of their language. They didn't want to learn other languages except their own language that is Setswana. They were very

concerned about their own things and their language. But today, the youth mix their language and culture with other tribes. Most Batswana families today forget their language and speak English to their children at home. Children do not even know what Setswana is. They seem to be a bit lost.

In the past the relations of the Batswana with other tribes or societies were not good. If you were not a Motswana, they regarded you as a stranger to them and you would be treated as a stranger or foreigner. You were not allowed to come into contact with them, nor to marry their children. This was regarded as a sin or as totally disrespectful.

Nowadays, there is a general complaint or feeling that the youth has lost respect for their elders and chiefs. Many practices and values will be less important to each successive generation. In some instances values and practices in a society, viz. respecting the chiefs, elders and cultures are affected by technology or its products. People do not see a reason to go back to their traditional culture and its values. Their lives have been affected by civilization.

From my observation, chiefs and ancestors in the past, were highly respected but the young people nowadays have lost respect. They do not know the importance of good behaviour. Youths nowadays no longer regard chiefs as heroes, and they even doubt the existence of the ancestors. They do not believe that ancestors can take control over their lives. Today people want change and not culture. They prefer civilization. Hofstede (1991:17) stresses the point that "education and occupation are in themselves powerful sources of cultural learning and change".

Education and status are important nowadays and heroes of the past who were regarded as brave warriors during the wars are no longer important. Educationists and politicians are the new heroes of today and play an important role in the life of the youth.

Traditionally, Batswana women were not considered suitable to play a role in traditional matters like in chieftaincy. Girls were only responsible for cleaning and cooking in the home and boys were responsible for looking after the cattle. But today men and women are equal. They do the same jobs and have the same responsibilities, as teachers, police, nurses, etc.

Because of these modern aspects, culture can no longer keep the Batswana together. The only thing that keeps them together is the belief in one God and the nostalgia for the customs of the past. The traditional culture seems to be abandoned because today some people do not practise it.

Nowadays, the authority of the chiefs has been diminished by the introduction of local government in rural areas. In the past it was only the chief who dictated the terms. But today the chief has little control over his people as local government has been implemented.

It is hard to tell what the future holds for our culture. I do not see a bright future for our traditional culture. Today there are so many things that affect our culture viz. civilization, urbanisation, politicians, introduction of churches, schools that accommodate children with different cultures, technology and so on. From my observation, even though the country calls for an African renaissance, most of the youth seem not to be concerned about this because they think they will be returning to old customs. They think it is for the old people.

The young people are also not in favour of traditional culture. In the past, all these modern aspects and technology were not applicable, the only thing that dominated their lives was their culture.

The four cultural aspects chosen for this study, viz. marriage, ancestors, chieftainship and witchcraft, give us a picture of how a Motswana used to live. They represent Batswana culture in a true light so that the younger generations can learn, adopt or inherit their culture. That is why literature is so important that it stores and maintains culture. I regard culture as a way of directing people's lives and of connecting people with the past. For people to know themselves, a critical analysis of cultural identity and the construction of identity should be made.

Culture is important today and it needs to be changed a bit even though it teaches respect, good behaviour and the rest of the customs and traditions. A group without culture is missing something in life. Life in the past ran smoothly. People did not suffer from different diseases. Life today still runs smoothly even though there are so many changes. People abandon most of the cultural practices that is, initiation school, regiments, cultural marriages and others.

The Tswana cultural practices, for example their way of marriage, respecting their ancestors, honouring of their chiefs and practising sorcery, clearly are symbols of their cultural identity and they are still regarded as important for the Batswana culture.

Culture is that which makes a person believe in himself and which makes life worth living. But nowadays culture needs to be reconstructed.

2.10. A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH ON CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

It is evident that the word culture as well as the reality of culture is complex. It can include everything in the life of an individual which in the end constitutes his/her cultural identity. Samovar & Porter (1991:51) define culture as “the deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving”. Culture, therefore, includes all the cultural aspects a person can imagine. It helps us to know who we are, where we belong and what we are capable of. It influences us from the day we are born. Culture cannot be seen but it can be practised.

Every group or individual's culture is important. According to Featherstone (1990:31), “culture is a way of summarising the ways in which groups distinguish themselves from other groups. It represents what is shared within the group and presumably simultaneously not shared outside it.”

Culture directs our lives and helps us to differentiate between good and wrong. It helps us to remember where we come from and who we really are. Culture can be noticed within a group or tribe. Featherstone indicates that there is no global culture but culture may lead people to globalisation. I disagree with Featherstone, that there is no global culture since here in South Africa we have pop music, Western lifestyle, T.V., films, cell phones, travel and tourism, global companies like Coca-Cola and American baseball caps, etc. which are all indications of a global culture.

Researchers have proposed different views of this complex concept to help us come to grips with culture.

Hofstede (1991:5) sees culture as something learned, and not inherited, which derives from one's social environment. He describes it as the collective programming of the mind. I agree with Hofstede that culture is learned. A child starts to learn culture within the family. The programming proceeds within the neighbourhood, i.e. at school, in youth groups and even in the living community. These practices make life meaningful and make the world meaningful. Samovar & Porter (1991:56) support the idea of Hofstede by saying "culture is not innate, it is learned", meaning that culture is not inborn but that it is learned and transmitted.

Hofstede also makes the important remark that culture is partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment, which is where it is learned. This programming of the mind distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another. According to Hofstede (1991:4), "the sources of one's mental programs lie within the social environments in which one grew up and collected one's life experiences". The Batswana, like other tribes, lived in the same environment and shared the same culture in the past.

The distinctions that Hofstede makes, viz. between human nature, personality and culture is appropriate because it is what it takes in real life.

In Batswana culture, respect and good behaviour play a major role. One has to be respectful. Respect is a distinctive aspect of the Batswana culture. Every adult was supposed to be respected as if he or she were your own parent. This is, however, no longer the state of affairs.

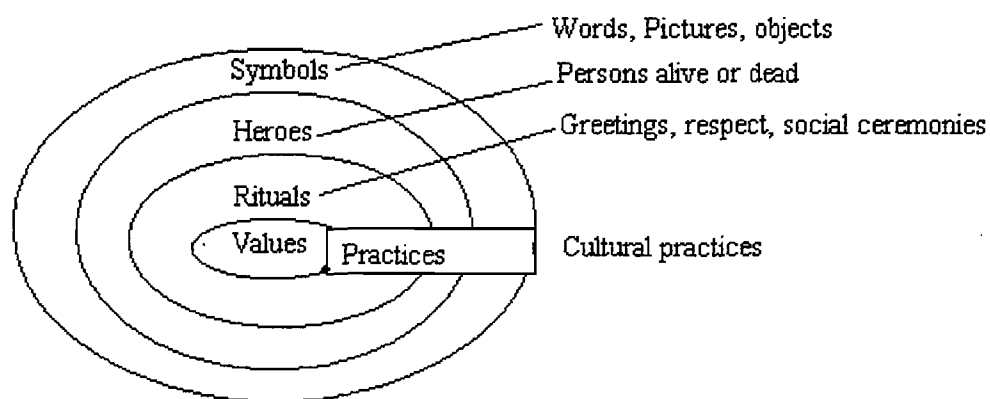
Hofstede (1991:5) also stresses the point that people carry several layers of mental programming within themselves corresponding to different levels of culture.

I agree with Hofstede's idea of a national level. Here in South Africa all the tribes are mixed, forming one nation as South Africans or People of the South. But in this nation, there are different societies with different cultures, unions or political parties to which every human is supposed to belong. Every country is full of distinctive cultures. People have things in

common, but act or react differently. One thing that can unite them is their idea of their culture, i.e. their unions, political parties and their sense of being a separate group, yet part of a bigger whole.

Even though the Batswana are civilised today, most still practise some of their traditional customs so that the coming generations should always be in touch with their customs and recognise their culture. I think Hofstede's ideas about culture fit well into this study of cultural identity and how people may recognise their own culture.

Diagram 3. Levels of culture.



The above diagram illustrates that cultural elements manifest themselves in several layers, viz. symbols, rituals, heroes and values (Hofstede 1991:7). Symbols represent the most superficial and values the deepest manifestations of culture with heroes and rituals in between. Symbols are words, objects and even customs etc. that carry a particular meaning which is only recognised by those who share the culture.

All the above elements are closely related and supply all the generations with important values, viz. respect, social relationships. They give them a sense of how they should do things according to their customs so that they can reflect and maintain their cultural identity by practising their culture.

Once people learn a new way of life, some of the cultural practices are completely abandoned. In the past people wore skins, but this has been replaced by modern clothes. As far as heroes are concerned, there are people who serve as models for the people, e.g. chiefs, politicians, celebrities, and presidents. Collective activities like marriages are considered socially valuable. Desirable and undesirable ways of life, i.e. distinctive values viz. respect and good behaviour are learned by all.

According to Cohen (1993), culture in the past was used to suggest a determination of behaviour, that you could only think the thoughts which your culture gave you. There was a line of thought which treated culture as the means by which the supposedly discrete processes of life, such as politics, economics, religion and kingship were integrated in a manner which made them all consistent with each other.

Hall (as quoted by Samovar & Porter 1991:46) says : “Culture is man's medium, there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture”. This includes personality, how people express themselves, the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function and are organised, as well as how economic and government systems are put together and functioning. But this does not mean culture determines behaviour, since people have the freedom to choose how they will act.

According to Huntington (1997:29), culture can change and the nature of its impact on politics and economics can vary from one period to another.

Radio and television keep us in touch with our culture, but on the other hand, they can also transmit culture. Some of our cultural practices are lost, i.e. people live in urban areas where traditional culture is no longer practised. Everyone does whatever is right for him/her.

Today our culture has changed tremendously. One of the reasons that culture is changing, is because the environment and living conditions have changed. People are moving into urban areas and their lifestyle has become modernised. They belong to unions and political parties. Traditional environments and living conditions have been replaced by a modern, urban, industrial environment which is totally different from the Batswana rural environment. Most

of the Batswana seem to be losing touch with their culture and this make them loose their dignity as Batswana. They will, at the end, be unable to recognise their cultural identity.

Nowadays the young people are very far from returning to their roots and as a result they are losing touch with their culture. One thing that can connect them to their culture, is literature, since literature stores and maintains the memory of their culture. People are able to identify themselves with the culture they find in books and are able to know where they belong and how to make life meaningful.

2.11. CONCEPTUALISING THE LINK BETWEEN LITERATURE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The most important question one may ask is whether there is a link between literature and culture and how culture is maintained in literature.

The view of the nature of culture set out above implies a relationship between literature and culture. Books are part of culture and play an important role in storing, maintaining and revealing the cultures of different tribes. For young people to know much about their culture, they need to read and study books but also videos, films, CD-ROM, and stories. Books help to guide people to behave according to their culture, and to honour their culture. According to Greenblatt (1990:228), “culture helps in articulating cultural codes of behaviour”, meaning that culture is flexible and is able to connect people with their tradition.

Literature is a source of cultural identity. According to Greenblatt (1990:228), “culture is stored, transmitted maintained and revealed in literature”. He also stresses that literature changes, modifies, renews and rememorises culture. Literature holds the memory of culture that can help a person to recall his culture. Authors express their knowledge of culture in literature. By referring to literature you are able to form a complex image of the culture of the tribe the author is writing about. This also applies to Tswana literature.

The Batswana cultural identity is changing. People are no longer involved in regiments but are grouped by attending the same class, attending the same church and so forth. Heroes of the past, who fought in the wars defending their land and the tribe are no longer heroes. The heroes of today are politicians, educationists, musicians, soccer players or T.V. celebrities.

The customs and values of the past, like respecting elders and the chief, cultural practises like seantlo and polygamy are no longer practised. Instead the church and Christianity made people marry only one wife.

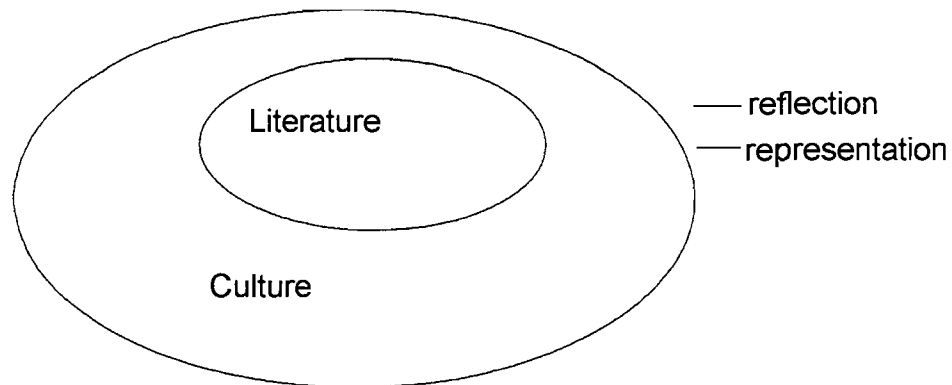
As far as I am concerned, cultural identity is the way in which culture is used to describe the identity of a particular group. Distinctive aspects of culture are used to construct Batswana cultural identity. The Batswana customs of marriage, chieftainship, sorcery and the veneration of ancestors are important aspects that distinguish the Batswana from other tribes, thus revealing their identity.

Bloom as quoted by Segers (1997:268) states the following:

“identification is an inherent and unconscious behavioural imperative in all individuals. Individuals actively seek to identify in order to achieve psychological security, and they actively seek to maintain, protect and bolster identity in order to maintain and enhance this psychological security which is a *sine qua non* of personality stability and emotional well-being. This imperative works from infancy through adulthood and old age. Moreover, identifications can be shared, with the result that individuals who share the same identification will tend to act in concert in order to protect or enhance their shared identity.”

According to the above quotation, people are fond of their culture and they want to maintain that. They believe by practising it, that it will secure their identity.

According to Segers (1997:267) cultural identity is based on the belief in the specificity of a certain community. I agree with him that cultural identity of a group or tribe is constructed by their beliefs and what they practise as a community. The cultural identity of a community can be known by others only when the community follows their norms and culture.

Diagram 4: LITERATURE AS A REFLECTION OF CULTURE

In the above diagram, literature is presented as part of culture and a way to store culture. For culture to spread or to be known, literature is there to guide us.

Literature forms a small part of culture. Literature reflects, represents, rewrites, preserves and revitalises culture. Literary studies and culture work together. The culture or civilization found in literature is very influential in the sense that when people have forgotten their culture, they could learn it from books and know how to behave according to their culture. Literature in other words, restores cultural memory.

In his play, *Pelo e ja serati*, Ntsime praises the culture of the Bakhudung and the fact that the Bakhudung want to live within the boundaries of their culture. According to their culture, Dithole, the chief's son, must marry his cousin and not a foreigner. The chief's wife must be a Motswana which implies a symbolic oneness. The Bakhudung are strongly controlled by the beliefs and practises that form their traditional culture. Most societies or tribes no longer practise their culture. They seem to have lost it. But literature helps us to recover that sense of culture. Greenblatt (1990:226) sums this up by saying: "An awareness of culture as a complex whole can help us to recover that sense by leading us to reconstruct the boundaries upon whose existence the works were predicted." Literature reinforces the behaviour, beliefs, practices and values of culture in people and also social understanding within the tribes themselves.

Literature carries aspects of culture and social values that can help people to understand the culture of a particular tribe or nation. Greenblatt (1990:227) stresses that “in order to understand or recover the meaning of the texts, to make any sense of them at all, we need to reconstruct the situation in the everyday world in which they were produced”. Greenblatt (1990:227) adds that “literary study is the servant of cultural understanding”. Nowadays people seem to forget what their culture is. But literary studies are there to help us understand what culture is and what is expected of us. Literature contains cultural memory. He further says that literature is an important agent of culture. Literature stages the conflicts, maintains, stores, changes and reveals culture.

Culture gives us important values of life. Culture is a particular network of negotiations for the exchange of material goods and ideas (Greenblatt 1990:229). Culture is like a set of rules for generations. It teaches the youth how to behave and the ways of a good life.

Traditional culture seems to be dying. People do not want to practise their culture anymore. Many people feel uncomfortable with their culture and have decided to abandon some of their practices. Here, literature can be used as an educational tool because it remembers, reflects and presents the culture that has been forgotten by most of the people. For Greenblatt (1990:229), “novels thematize and re-remember their own place in culture. They help to shape, articulate and reproduce it”. He continues that artists are themselves gifted creators of variations upon received themes, culture as determination gives people freedom and as a system of constraints can be negotiated. The works they create are structures for the accumulation, transformation, representation and communication of social energies and practices.

The nature of culture for Greenblatt is that it is a set of restrictions and a circulation of social energy. The texts depict competitive social forces, but also how social rules/restrictions are negotiated, transgressed, undermined or contained and absorbed by culture.

The work of art is very essential because it can bring out the cultural sense of which the text is indicating. This will lead people into their culture and the use of it as it appears in the text.

Proverbs and sayings play an important role in as far as cultural identity is concerned e.g. “mme lo raya gore go ka tshwanela, fa mohumagadi wa kgosi e se Motswana”. (Do you think it can be proper, if the chief’s wife is not a Motswana). The quotation explains clearly that the Batswana respect their culture and do not want to mix with other cultures as this can spoil their culture. (Ntsime 1982:17). Words carry a particular meaning which is strongly appreciated by those who share a culture. Therefore, such values and norms appear in a written form and are regularly copied by others. Segers (1992:1) sums this up by saying “language is a symbolic guide to culture”. Every society has its unique application of its language and this will determine in which culture the group or tribe falls. Language is the best evidence of the reality of culture because it can be taught and transmitted to the upcoming generations. It can also be used as a guide to behaviour and identity. Samovar (1972:13) supports the idea of Segers that “culture and language are inseparably intertwined”.

According to Segers (1992:275), “literature has an excellent opportunity to construct basic elements of the cultural identity of a certain nation or group, to represent important aspects of a particular community”. Important aspects of culture and values appear in literature which are to be selected and considered so that people can be reminded of their culture and also to use aspects of traditional culture to construct a modern cultural identity.

Information about the nature of the cultural differences between societies and their roots can be obtained, stored, questioned and negotiated in literature. Rituals which are considered as socially essential appear generally in most books. Ways of greeting and paying respect to others, social and religious ceremonies are examples which are often partly revealed in Tswana literature.

Artists or authors are very creative in reflecting culture in literature. As a result readers try to behave like the characters in the books because they feel they have lost their culture. Therefore, we cannot deny the fact that literature has a strong and modeling influence on the cultural identity of an individual.

2.12. CHANGES IN BATSWANA CULTURE

Now is a good time to study the Batswana culture before it disappears totally. It is believed that in South African urban areas, Batswana culture is gradually disappearing as a result of Western civilisation. The coming of the missionaries brought a great change in the Batswana way of life and caused a break with certain basic tribal habits and customs, such as polygamy, initiation ceremonies, cultural weddings and lobola. The missionaries forced the Batswana to have a monogamous marriage and children were sent to school to be educated. Some of the people do not plough today, though most of them still have cattle. On the other hand, the coming of the missionaries appeared to be helpful or important because people turned to one wife which was the meaningful sign of the new faith. Circumcision which kills many young boys, is now done in the hospital under sterile conditions.

The Batswana are no longer holding rainmaking ceremonies. According to Lye & Murray (1980:122) the "chief had to employ a powerful doctor as a sort of public health official whose duty is to provide protective medicines for the village and to summon rain". The Batswana believed that the ancestors were involved in everything they did. For the rain medicines to work and not to be spoiled, contact with anyone who had had sexual experience had to be avoided. It is believed that the ancestors would refuse the rain in that case. Schapera (1970) also contributed much towards the conservation of the rainmaking rites of the Batswana tribes. He persuaded Kgajwana (the rainmaker) to deposit these rainmaking materials in the ethnological museum of the University of Cape Town.

The Batswana discontinued some of their practices in which they believed, which had previously given them the sense of being real Batswana. Some do not marry according to the Batswana traditional marriage and there are also only a few initiation schools left or regiments or traditional clothes. They do not follow the succession of chiefs. The coming of the missionaries changed the life of the Batswana, but the negative part of it is that they forgot their cultural practices because life had changed tremendously. Nowadays one may say they are crying over spilt milk, especially the young generation. Their tradition and identity only appear in books. I think this is the right time for the Batswana to revitalise their tradition, practise what they believe in and to bring out their identity for the next generations. Life would be meaningful to the Batswana again and they could lead an enjoyable life. The

Batswana enjoyed their cultural practices very much in the past, but today it is just unfortunate that people do not want to practise them anymore.

Nowadays it is very difficult to identify a Motswana by their way of clothing or their language, because they mix Setswana with other languages like English, Xhosa and Sesotho even though others still speak Setswana perfectly. Their style of living has changed tremendously. People do whatever pleases them because they are no longer controlled by their culture. They no longer have cultural restraints and a strong sense of values that force them to stick to their culture.

A chief was succeeded by the eldest son of his great wife or if he had no son or if he was still young, a paternal uncle was chosen to act as regent. This is no longer practised, but chieftainship is still hereditary according to Tswana traditional rules. Today chiefs are elected by the government. They do not follow the Tswana customs.

Today's generation do not respect a chief, but call him by his name. The Batswana used to call the chief by the name of his regiment or address him with "mokgatla". This was their way of identifying their chief and indicating that he was no ordinary person. But this is only practised by elderly people. I think a nation or tribe who does not practise its culture is putting the upcoming generations in danger and they will never keep in touch with their culture. They will never know or understand their culture.

One may say that cultural identity is something which people have or search for, something which people are supposed to negotiate and construct. The identity of the tribe plays a vital role. The customs a tribe practises, clearly construct its culture, i.e. the way the members live, communicate and socialise. We, as the Batswana, even if things have changed, must not run away from these cultural practices so that we do not forget our culture because it contains important values, maintains a sense of identity and where we come from and who we really are. We have to construct a new identity.

Western civilization has played a big part in changing the social world of the Batswana. Among a considerable proportion of the population, Christianity has largely supplanted the ancestor cult and other traditional beliefs, rituals and values.

In conclusion one may say culture and cultural practices form a major part of the life of the individual. Civilization may change everything but the most important thing is that one must never forget one's culture. Most of the youth today know nothing about their culture, especially those who live in urban areas. So, to help them know their culture, it must be practised to some extent and it must be recorded in books.

Today's generations have lost some of the values of the Batswana culture. They no longer have respect for elderly people, authority and ancestors whom they think do not exist. They have less respect for their language which makes them unique. They mix their language with the languages of the neighbouring tribes.

In the next chapter a report on interviews with a number of people will be given. The chapter will determine how people perceive their culture, their marriage, ancestors and witchcraft. The question is : do they still want to go back to their roots and practice culture? The chapter will reconsider whether the Batswana cultural values remain constant. This will be done to indicate how the younger generation feels about traditional culture today.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN BATSWANA CULTURE ACCORDING TO SPOKESPEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the interviews with the spokespeople and their indications about Batswana cultural identity. The focus will be on the way the Batswana live, how the selected cultural aspects function, their symbolic meaning and their links to the cultural life of the Batswana in general.

The focus will mainly be on the life-history of the interviewees, their views on ancestors, marriage, chieftainship and witchcraft. In the end conclusions about the construction of cultural identity according to the spokespeople will be made.

Seven people were interviewed, i.e. two teachers, three old people and two youths. Every person was contacted thrice at his/her home. The interviews were recorded on tape and some were written down.

The main question is, what distinctive practices, customs and beliefs are indicated by the spokespeople? What indications of cultural identity emerge from the interviews?

According to the Batswana, culture plays a major role in their lives. They believe that respect and good behaviour must be exercised and even their children must learn that. They believe that their lifestyle is mainly based on ploughing crops and raising cattle. According to the Batswana, their cultural practices determine their cultural identity and unite them as a society.

3.1. LIFE-HISTORY OF THE INTERVIEWEES

Q. Tell me your life history

PERSON A.

His name is Ranko Motlhaga. He was interviewed in November 2000 at his home in Saulspoort. He was born on 16 March 1954 at Saulspoort in the District of Rustenburg. The

Batswana like to build their houses at the foot of mountains because they are fond of farming and also to protect themselves in times of war. He started his career as a teacher on 14 January 1975. He got married in 1984 and the couple was blessed with two sons and one daughter. He had a good relationship with his parents. At present he is a deputy principal at Tsopo Middle School in the Tsitsing Circuit. He regards himself as an agent of change and a very dynamic person as far as education is concerned.

PERSON B.

His name is Johannes Pilane. He was interviewed at his home in Moruleng in November 2000. His birth name is Rapula (Rain). He was born in April 1936 at Pilanesberg. His family moved to Ramatshaba in 1942 where he started schooling at Ramatshaba Primary School and passed standard six (Grade 8). He continued to a secondary school where he obtained the Junior Certificate. He proceeded to Bafokeng High in 1959. After obtaining the Matric Certificate of the Joint Matriculation Board, he went to Johannesburg.

He attended a commercial school. He went for professional training at Wilberforce, but he was not able to complete his studies there. He was suspended for three years and he then later completed his teacher's course at Hebron Training College. He went to Jabavu where he taught for six months and then he went back to the factories in 1966-1970. When he left Johannesburg he was a married man with three children.

He started teaching at Moruleng High School, and was later transferred to Kgamanyane High School. He decided to go to the University of the North. He came back and he was then given a senior post at Batleng High School where he worked as a deputy principal and the very same year they obtained a 84.6% pass rate. Then his principal got promoted to Circuit Manager.

After acquiring a B.A. degree, he completed his honours degree at the University of Potchefstroom. He started his master's degree but he was too ill to go on. This is what led him to an early retirement in 1997. Because of his good relationship with his parents, he strongly believes that they and his ancestors protected him and helped him to recover from his illness. From there he joined the tribal office where he is still working as educational advisor of the chief.

PERSON C.

His name is Poonyane Phaladi Lesobe. He was interviewed in January 2001 at his home in Lerome near Mogwase. He was born on 10 March 1916. He married his cousin in 1944. They were blessed with eight children, four sons and four daughters. During his lifetime, he never worked or found a job, but his family survived by ploughing crops and farming. He later became a headman as he was one of the royal family. His relationship with his parents was very good in the sense that he still believes and hopes that it is because of them that he made a success of his life.

PERSON D.

Her name is Kesetse Jessie Mpele. She was interviewed at her home at Molatedi (Noupoort). She was born in 1930 on December 23. She attended Molatedi Primary until standard 4 (Grade 6). She later went to Mabeskraal Primary and then Rakoko High School. She stayed there for one year. She got married in 1955 and she was blessed with seven children, three sons and four daughters. She never worked or found a job. Her relationship with her parents was very good. Even now she thinks they still love her wherever they are.

PERSON E.

His name is Johannes Tshoko Malebye. He is a student in Grade 12. He was interviewed at Kgabutle High School in January 2000. He was born on 29 March 1982. He attended Mpyane Primary school. He thereafter went to Tshomankane Middle School where he spent three years. From 1998 he attended Kgabutle High School.

PERSON F.

Her name is Nthabiseng Molefe. She is a Grade 11 student. She was interviewed in February 2001 at Kgabutle High School. She was born on 1 September 1984 in Lesetlheng. She attended Lesetlheng Primary School from 1991-1996. She then went to Tshomankane Middle School from 1997-1999 where she passed standard seven (Grade 7). At Tshomankane Middle School, she took part in the school choir and she was also one of the traditional dancers. She enjoyed her schooling there very much. She has been at Kgabutle High School since 2000 and is still there at present. Her relationship with her parents is very good.

PERSON G.

Her name is Johanna Mmamarukhu Modiane Mabale. She was interviewed on 22 April 2001 at her home in Sebokeng (Vereeniging). She was born on 12 January 1939. She attended Mpyane Primary School in 1949. She got married in 1965 in the Dutch Reformed Church and she was blessed with five children, two sons and three daughters. She worked as a domestic worker, first in Krugersdorp and then at Vanderbylpark, and retired in 1972. She had a good relationship with her parents. She feels very proud to be a Motswana because her parents were also Batswanas.

Although most of the interviewees are educated, one may notice that what forms their identity is their customs. They still believe in their ancestors, in chieftainship and respect for their parents. But on the other hand one may say that their education forms their identity. Most of them are educated and as a result they did not involve themselves in regiments or even go to initiation school. They concentrated mainly on education.

3.2. INTERVIEWEES' FEELINGS ABOUT THEIR CULTURE AND ABOUT BEING A MOTSWANA

The following questions were posed to find out how people feel about being a Motswana and how they feel about their Batswana culture.

Q. How do you feel about being a Motswana?

Interviewees feel proud to be a Motswana because they do not want to lose their culture. Forgetting your culture, means forgetting who you are. They feel that being a Motswana means being distinguished from all black people on the African continent and being on top of the world because the Batswana are one of the tribes in Africa. The Batswana are said to be peace loving people.

Being a Motswana means a lot to the spokespeople. They feel very happy to be Batswana because the Batswana have a role to play among the eleven ethnic language groups in South Africa. They want to instil a love of culture in the youth. The spokespeople like to show people how important their culture is. They want to make them feel proud of being a

Motswana. Their parents are also Batswana whom they believe instilled in them a love for being regarded as Batswana and from whom they learnt their culture.

The Batswana have been recognised as a people since the 18th century. The Batswana played a key role during the era of the homelands when they developed the homeland, Bophuthatswana, even though it does not exist anymore. Botswana, on the other hand, is still regarded as the country where the Batswana live in large numbers.

The interviewees are proud to be regarded as Batswana. They do not want to mix with other tribes because they feel that they may lose their language, tradition, lineage and birth identity.

Q. How do you feel about the Batswana culture?

In as far as the Batswana culture is concerned, they see it as a rich culture. They like their culture because they believe that their traditional cultural dress still today has an impact in their children. They appreciate the beauty of the outfits even though they do not want to use them. Older people still respect their traditional clothes. They like eating their cultural foods like morogo and mabele porridge, but the youth nowadays prefer meat, maize porridge and vegetables. They believe that morogo makes them feel constipated.

They say that the Batswana culture was able to withstand the difaqane during the era of king Chaka, Dingaan and Mzilikazi. The interviewees showed that culture is still practised in areas of Botswana especially in Mochudi in Botswana and in many places here in South Africa like Moruleng, Zeerust, Mafikeng, Makapanstad and others.

The spokespeople have to conform to the pattern of their life. That is why they feel great about their culture. According to them the Batswana culture is very interesting. People do not easily forget their roots. It prevents children from practising or doing bad things because Batswana culture teaches them certain values, good behaviour and respect, and they help them realise their identity and where they belong. Children learn to cope with their culture. According to Batswana culture, elderly people should be respected like our own parents. They are not allowed to call elderly people by their names. To show respect they use names like grandfather aunt, sister or uncle instead.

Q. Can you still practise it?

The teachers and old people I have interviewed, all believe that if you are a Motswana, it is important that you always practise your culture. The older people felt good about the Batswana culture. The younger people or students do not agree on this point because they believe that civilization has destroyed their culture. They cannot go back and practise it. They feel very remote from their culture and are ashamed to wear traditional clothes.

According to the older people, Batswana culture should be exercised because it is the way things used to be in the past and we can retain our culture by practising it and that is a Motswana style of life. Batswana culture can still be practised, for example in the field of folklore by telling stories around the fire, by brewing beer in calabashes and also by making use of animal skins for sewing traditional gear. Today, no stories are told around the fire at night because television has taken that position.

Q. How do you think and feel about Tswana culture?

The interviewees think that Batswana in the new dispensation also need to identify themselves by speaking Setswana. For them, their language is the main criterion for being recognised as a Motswana and they feel that they cannot afford to choose to speak other languages rather than Setswana. As real Batswana who love their culture, they need not allow other cultures to destroy their culture. The young generation should know their culture even though some of them do not want to practise it because they think it is outdated. They need to know some traditional Batswana terms, some of which are no longer used by our children like 'sebube' (porridge made of sour-milk). They believe that one cannot say children must be taught in their home language, because they want their children to change with time. Things have changed and the medium of instruction in black schools is English, but they still think mother tongue instruction is very important, especially at primary level. Young children about the age of 12-18 feel bad about practising their culture. They stressed that it is not appropriate in the new era where they are influenced by Western civilization and as a result they feel that their culture is outdated.

The culture of a society is that which makes it a society. The Batswana's cultural practices lead to their cultural identity. According to the interviewees, culture means a way of life and how people live in a certain place practising and believing in one culture. According to Eagleton (2000:112) culture is "the way of life of a particular people living together in one place".

A culture is always partly unknown and is partly unrealised (Eagleton 2000:34). One can never say one knows one's culture completely, but one can practise it without realising that one is doing the same thing which ultimately turns out to be their common culture. According to Eagleton (2000:34), "culture can be loosely summarised as the complex of values, customs, beliefs and practices which constitute the way of life of a specific group". Eagleton further argues that culture includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.

The interviewees believe that being a Motswana means a lot. They don't want to lose or forget their culture. I do agree with them that being a Motswana means to belong. According to Eagleton (2000:55), what makes a person who he is "is the species to which he belongs". He further states that culture is in itself the spirit of humanity in individuating itself in specific works, and its discourse links the individual and the universal, the self and the truth of humanity.

Like the interviewees I also feel that the Batswana culture is very rich. For culture to be productive it must be put into practice. In the past the Batswana were fond of their cultural food and clothes which differ from other cultures and made them unique. Today they feel uncomfortable with them because their culture has changed tremendously. Their cultural clothes were made of animal skins and no shoes were worn but today they wear clothes of different materials. Some of the Batswana practices are their marital songs, songs practised from their initiation school, poems which were randomly composed, farming, language, ancestors, chieftaincy, their style of marriage, ways of greeting and paying respect to others. By practising these, they feel that their culture is real and they do not want to lose it. They believe these customs make them feel distinguishable from other tribes. They want it to be transmitted to the upcoming generations. I agree with the interviewees that one should feel

proud about one's culture so that will be able to conform to the pattern of life or to handle any situation in life.

I also agree with the interviewees that culture should be exercised because culture has common problems which demand co-operation. According to Lye & Murray (1980:15), "no study of a culture is adequate which fails to catch the inwardness of that culture". The belief in culture must come from within and must be strong so that we can avoid the pressure of other cultures. I think culture is what people consider important for them. According to Eagleton (2000:34) "culture is the belief that human beings are what they are taught".

Concerning the feelings of the interviewees about their culture, I feel that the Batswana in the new dispensation need to identify themselves. They need to love their culture. Their culture should not be destroyed by civilization. According to this notion, Eagleton (2000:11) stresses the point that "if culture is to be an effective critique of life, however, it must retain its social dimension". The tribe also must retain its values of culture. He further says that the conflict between culture and civilization thus belongs to a full-blown quarrel between tradition and modernity.

In conclusion one may say the Batswana believe strongly in their culture. They believe that what constitutes them is their cultural practices viz. the respect for their ancestors, their style of marriage, ways of greeting and respect for others. They feel that they cannot prefer other cultures to their own culture.

One of the most important things about the Batswana culture, is their belief in ancestors. They strongly believe in their ancestors and they trust them. There is nothing that they do without first asking for help from their ancestors. In everything they do or touch, they ask them. The following questions serve as a guide in this regard:

3.3. ANCESTORS

The Batswana believe in the help of the dead. They hold that the souls of dead people become spirits (badimo) who ultimately find their way to a world to protect them and they lead a life very similar to that on earth. These ancestors continue to take an active interest in the fortunes of their living descendants over whose behaviour they exercise a powerful

control. They reward with good health and prosperity those who treat them with due respect and obedience but the Batswana also believe that those who neglect their ancestors, would be punished with sickness, economic loss or some other misfortune. Those who offend their guardians are punished. Each family is under the direct guidance of its own ancestors who in turn are interested only in the affairs of their own descendants.

Q. Do you think ancestors exist ?

Not all of the people interviewed by me agree on the existence of the ancestors. There are those who believe that ancestors do exist. They do believe that our lives are guided and secured by ancestors. One of them believes that they healed him when he was in hospital and very sick and that they said to him in a dream “tsoga o fodile” (wake up you have recovered). That was the end of his illness. Ancestors visit them in the form of dreams. They strongly believe that things like rain are determined and made by ancestors. They believe that the ancestors can influence their lives. The young people, on the other hand, do believe that there are ancestors as they are told but they do not really believe in them because they think the idea is something of the past.

Q. Who are the ancestors?

All the interviewees have the perception that their ancestors are their grandfathers and grandmothers who have passed away. They put their trust in them instead of having trust in God. They believe that these grandparents are their ancestors. In my opinion, not only our grandparents are our ancestors but also our parents even if they are still alive. The Bible also says : “ Tlotla rraago le mmaago gore malatsi a gago a nne mantsi mo lefatsheng le Morena, Modimo wa gago, a tla le go nayang”. (Respect your father and mother so that your days can be increased on the land that your God will give you.) (Exodus 20 verse 12). Respect plays an important role in the lives of the Batswana.

In my opinion, ancestors are not human beings but are the spirits of our grandparents. They are associated with good things that the Batswana regard as important for their culture. They can protect people from illness and from harm. One may say that these are good spirits who have the well-being of their descendants at heart rather than evil spirits that lead to Satanism.

Q. What is the importance of the ancestors?

They all believe that the ancestors guide us and protect us, and bring rain. We seek their guidance in whatever we are undertaking, whether preparing for marriage, protecting the chief, cultivating our land, or establishing a family. On all these occasions, you ask your ancestors to show you whether you are on the right track. They believe that the ancestors can protect you from your illness if you are sick and they will tell you what to do so that you can recover. They also believe that if you have a family problem, the ancestors can help. To become a traditional doctor, is a gift from the ancestors and if not, a talent for curing people will never work.

Q. Is it necessary that people should believe in ancestors?

The young people see no reason why people should still believe in ancestors because God is there for them. The ancestors cannot offer more than God. It is just a saying or belief that ancestors are there and that we should believe in them.

Concerning the ancestors, the interviewees agree with Lye & Murray (1980:123) that “they take an active interest in the welfare of their living descendants”. Lye & Murray also stress the point that the ancestors represent the ultimate source of man’s well-being. All of them believe that their lives are directed towards the ancestors rather than towards God. I do agree with them in the sense that even though the Western civilization changed our lives, ancestors are our dead parents. They protect us and reveal themselves in our dreams and warn us about danger that could happen to us. The Batswana distinguished the original Batswana concept that ancestors are their saviours, their culture and they should conform with them. I totally agree with them that ancestors do exist.

I align myself with the interviewees that ancestors can protect us and if they have a complaint, they tell you in a dream or give a message to someone in a dream. Lye & Murray (1980:124) also stress this point that “the most common manifestation of the ancestors is a complaint transmitted in a dream”. They mentioned that ancestors may say “we are hungry, give us food”. They also mentioned that they can say “Re a gatsela”, meaning we are cold. For the Batswana this is an indication that they must buy a tombstone for them.

I think the 'offering to the ancestors' plays an important role in Batswana life but the interviewees did not mention it. We must believe in the importance of the dead, as this is our Batswana custom. We should respect it even though Christianity is against this.

Lye & Murray (1980:124) also agree with the interviewees that when you do not do what the ancestors tell you, they may sharply remind you by inflicting illness or misfortune on you. To the young generation this is totally unacceptable because they do not believe it.

I do believe that our ancestors are important in various ways. Arranging feasts or offering, I think, is not the only way of indicating our belief in them. Naming a child after your grandfather or grandmother, is also an indication that you want to feel the presence of your grandparents as your ancestors. Going back to where your grandparents lived and building a house there, cleaning their graves and going to pray and asking whatever you need, means that you want to keep in touch with them.

To conclude this section, one may say that the interviewees regard the ancestors as an important concern of all people including the Batswana. These customs tell us about the concern of the Batswana for their ancestors. Even if their ancestors are dead, they feel as if they are still alive. They feel their presence wherever they go or involve their spirit in whatever they do. I think we must all respect them and know how to handle this phenomenon according to our culture.

Marriage is something that binds man and wife together. The Batswana marriage maintains its traditional culture indicating the steps to be followed.

3.4. MARRIAGE

Marriage, like any other social relationship, establishes special rights and duties among the people concerned. The family among the Batswana tribe is based upon marriage. For a marriage to be regarded as lawful and complete, the contracting parties must comply with certain conditions. According to Batswana customary law, various transactions between the two families of a man and a woman are necessary to constitute the relationship of 'marriage'. The most important aspect is the transfer of cattle from the husband's family to the wife's family. Coertze (1987:156) writes that " there is only one way of concluding a legal

marriage, and that is by handing over lobola in the form of cattle or money". He further says that the transfer of lobola is one of the essential acts which characterise a legal marriage.

Marriage is accompanied by celebrations which indicate perfect happiness. For the Batswana, marriage is an important aspect which builds up an undying love, respect and good relationship among the families.

The Batswana marriage involves many things that challenge one's mind. To systematise these aspects, the following questions were used to guide and help us penetrate into the Batswana culture.

Q. What do you know about the Batswana cultural marriage?

The interviewees regard marriage as an important issue in their lives. They all agree that a Batswana marriage is a type of marriage declared and negotiated by the parents. As such one cannot easily break from cultural marriage. When you reach a certain age, you go to initiation school which is called 'bogwera'. There is also what they call 'Go isa marago kgosing' after a period of initiation. Young girls assemble at the lekgotla where the chief chooses a wife for himself. This takes three months. Thereafter the girls are called to assemble at the kgotla where the initiates choose their wives. A boy may marry his uncle's daughter, rakgadi, rangwane (the younger brother of your father). According to their culture there is nothing wrong, with doing so; on the contrary, it is preferred.

Parents of both families have to meet and make all the necessary arrangements for the wedding. After the negotiations, lobola is paid. After the payment, the wife may go to her husband and no marriage certificate is issued. Sometimes the arrangement of the wedding and the payment of lobola was done at the tribal office so that the chief might also know that so and so have been married.

Others believe that in the past lobola was paid when the negotiations for the marriage had been completed. The marriage was then complete. But this is also practised today even though after lobola, the marriage is not complete. A marriage certificate must be issued and a ceremony must take place. The Batswana also believe that a wife should be stolen and thereafter, her parents must be informed about the whereabouts of their daughter. After that

they make arrangements for lobola. In this respect the Batswana do not differ from the Xhosa. If lobola has not been paid or your marriage has not been negotiated by your parents, a child born from that marriage will never be accepted because his mother is not regarded as being married, and even today this fact still stands. The Xhosa lobola is strictly cattle, about fifteen to twenty cattle.

Seantlo, on the other hand, was also practised in the Batswana culture. The most important thing about it was to take care of your brother's family and to retain the surname. Lye & Murray are of the opinion that 'seantlo' was incorporated into the household to make sure that children that were born retained the surname of the dead man. I do agree with the interviewees. I do have my doubts, though, about the fairness of it. No marriage proposal was made. The man would merely enter the house and the marriage would be complete without paying lobola. Older people did not care about your feelings. The only thing for you was to accept and take that man as your husband. This is totally unacceptable. Fortunately, not all people are practising this. I also align myself with the young people that this must come to an end.

Q. What is the importance of lobola ?

All interviewees agree that lobola is very important in a Batswana marriage. It gives you the dignity and pride that you are married. It shows manhood and that you are capable of looking after the wife you are being given to. Lobola is also paid to bind the two families together. The interviewees also agree that lobola is an important issue in their marriage because no marriage can take place without it. After lobola has been paid, they take the marriage as complete.

According to them, it is another way of saying thank you for the wife you received. If the lobola has been paid, the family will accept you. For the Batswana lobola was four cattle.

Q. Do you feel that lobola should be paid ?

The feeling of the majority of interviewees was that lobola should still be paid. Even today lobola plays an important role. This is their culture and lobola should not be stopped. According to Tswana culture, you can pay as much lobola as you can afford. Even one cow was enough for lobola, as long as the parents had come to an agreement.

Very few people of the youth feel that lobola should be abolished. Our children become the victims of their husbands because of lobola. Cultural marriage is taken without a certificate and this helps if a man does not want you, because he cannot claim that you are his wife.

Q. What are your feelings about money being paid as lobola ?

They all feel that lobola should strictly be cattle not money as it was in the past. They must not forget their roots. If you use money, it looks as if you are buying a person.

They feel that nowadays people are unemployed and they don't have money to buy cattle for lobola. After paying lobola, the two partners may experience problems like being unable to buy food or clothes. They also feel that money paid as lobola has no dignity and they believe that churches and missionaries have contributed a lot to this. The Christians have ruined their culture.

Q. According to your culture how is the wife chosen?

The interviewees all agree that it is the responsibility of the parents to choose a wife for the man and that this was done exclusively within the family among relations by blood. The two families would come together and reach a certain agreement about the marriage. Today the man is allowed to choose his own wife. Parents are only involved when the marriage arrangements are to be made. The older people indicated that from childhood, the parents, especially the boy's parents, did what we call 'Go tlhoma letlhokwa' (to place an object over a girl), to choose a wife for a man while still young. This was a sign of engagement. This was usually done at an early stage when the child was four years old. The agreement was never broken. They would wait for the child to grow up until she would be old enough to be married. But today this does not happen anymore.

In most cases a wife was the choice of the parents, but if they had no preference, they relied on the man's choice. But they can tell you that this one does not fit you or that she is not good for you. The interviewees all believe that certain steps were followed when choosing a wife. They take into consideration the wife's status. There is also a Batswana proverb which says 'Phuti tlaa o je letlhodi', meaning that a woman gets married so that the man should take care of her and feed her. This kind of marriage lasts forever because, in most cases, the wife

was chosen from among the man's relatives and it is not easy to leave her because they are related by blood. No divorces can take place because in a case of divorce the children will lose their identity.

Other important things which were looked into regarding the choice of a wife, was whether a wife came from a good family. When choosing a wife one must avoid a family of cripples, avoid a family of witches and witchcraft. Choose a family that conforms to the customs of the people or, most important, a family which is well behaved. A wife must not be lazy. When choosing a wife the parents should also guard against hereditary diseases.

Q. What are your thoughts about irregular marriages?

They all think that this kind of marriage is bad. They are totally against it because it destroys and undermines our culture. It is bad in the sense that the parents do not negotiate the marriage. As a result, that marriage will never last. There is nothing that binds the man and the woman. Coertze (1987:164) stresses that "if a boy and a girl elope and live together, subsequently claiming that they are married, this will certainly not be accepted by their parents as a genuine marriage". He further says that the cohabitation of a man and a woman can never be a legal marriage.

Irregular marriages are what the Batswana refer to as "vat en sit", i.e. a boy takes a girl to his place and makes her his wife without any arrangement with their parents. I do believe that the interviewees have a point here. This really destroys and undermines our culture. I feel that this must be stopped because it creates problems.

I agree with the interviewees that lobola should be paid. This is the most important issue in the marriage of the Batswana. In the old Batswana life, marriage with cattle was deeply rooted in the Batswana tradition. According to Lye & Murray (1980:112) "the child belongs to the cattle". This meant that if bogadi/lobola is not transferred, the father is not regarded as the legal father.

According to the Batswana tradition, the lobola should be given immediately before the final wedding feast and if not, the husband's people could not kill cattle for the final wedding feast at their home until this was settled.

Schapera (1977:138) also agrees with the interviewees “that lobola is a thanksgiving to the wife’s parents for the care they have spent on her upbringing, and as a sign of gratitude for their kindness in now allowing her husband to marry her”.

There are some changes brought about by the missionaries and some chiefs that lobola should be stopped because it is ‘wife purchasing’ and ‘child purchasing’. I disagree with this because this is not according to Tswana customs. Lobola must be transferred. Even today when lobola is not paid, the marriage is not complete. That is why the custom of lobola is still continuing. I agree with Schapera (1977:139) and the interviewees believe that the main function of lobola is to “transfer the reproductive power of a woman from her own family into that of her husband.”

I believe that the concept of lobola/bogadi for the Batswana marriage should not be abolished. This is the way of the Batswana to show that their marriage is legal and to assure the husband the right to marry.

I agree with the interviewees that lobola should strictly be cattle. Lobola should not be paid with money. This is really destroying our culture. Sometimes the husband ill-treats you and tells you that he has bought you. He can do whatever he likes because you belong to him.

Q. What are your feelings about modern marriage customs?

Some of the interviewees believe that modern marriage ends up in divorce and negligence, and leads to lawlessness and disorder.

They also believe that modernity has contributed a lot to today’s marriage. There must be a certificate to show that you are married and there must also be witnesses.

They are worried about today’s marriages because they do not last. Some marry for security purposes and others because so and so drives a beautiful car, he is rich and famous. As a result it is not a true marriage, i.e. the criteria for a true marriage are not followed. The father or parents of the son must take the initiative and choose the wife for their son. Negotiations between both parents must take place and the transfer of lobola must take place, followed

by the wedding ceremony. Married people should only be separated by death. It is heartbreaking to see our children marrying for a short period, for example six months, and then in the seventh month filing for divorce.

Most of the younger people like this type of marriage, since you are allowed to choose a partner of your choice. The arrangement is still the one of the Tswana marriage but a marriage certificate is issued. According to them modern marriage is best. There is nothing wrong with it.

Q. Why is initiation important before marriage?

In the past, as mentioned by Coertze (1987:142), “the father was not permitted to finalise the marriage of his son or daughter until the child concerned had been through the initiation ceremony”. My informants believe that initiation is very important in the sense that it teaches you about your culture, good behaviour and to distinguish between elders and younger people. Coertze (1987:142) regards “initiation as representing the dividing line between childhood and adulthood”. This also leads to communal social bonding where people are working in groups. They feel that when you come from initiation school, it means you have reached maturity. They regard you as a real man or woman. Coertze also stresses the point that anyone who had not undergone initiation would be regarded as immature and could not be given in marriage.

There is an informal education which is conducted at the initiation school. People who are conversant with the law teach you the behavioural patterns of a married person. If you have finished initiation school, you are given the name of your regiment. According to younger people, bogwera is not important. It is just a waste of time. They think that circumcision that is performed during the initiation school should be done in hospitals.

I agree with the interviewees that initiation was very important in the life of the Batswana even though its not in practice today. This indicated your manhood and womanhood. People were taught good behaviour, given laws and behavioural patterns of marriage. What the interviewees did not make mention of, is the songs they sang there. Everyone had to compose his own song and a poem and they were also given the name of their regiment. Schapera

(1977:127) also agrees that “boys and girls had to pass through the initiation ceremonies conferring upon them the status of adults”.

Q. What is the significance of polygamy in Tswana culture?

According to older people, polygamy is very important in the Batswana culture. One may not decide to marry a woman who is not recognised by the family or relatives. If you marry more than one wife your family must first accept her. Then there will be peace. You cannot leave your family and go after another wife. When you marry another woman it does not mean that the first one is rejected. She is the senior of them all.

Another important thing about polygamy is that all women will be married. They believe that polygamy guarded against the spread of venereal diseases. When the first wife is old, the second one is married to help the old wife.

Younger people are against this type of marriage. They feel that this is not important. Polygamy creates hatred and jealousy among the wives and their children. The father will not be able to support the whole family with enough food, clothes and education as the standard of education and cost of living are very high.

Q. Why is seantlo (literally: “creeping into someone’s house”) important in Tswana culture ?

They all agree that seantlo in Tswana culture is very important because the integrity of the family or of the direct family is withheld by the love of the one who marries or takes over after his brother’s death to take care of the family. This is so important in the sense that the Batswana do not want to leave the family as poor because brothers and sisters join hands to see to it that the family of their brother is well cared for. The family of your brother will never be discarded and the wife will never return where she comes from. Another important thing about seantlo is that it guards against different surnames in one family. Young people find it less important and feel it must be stopped.

I agree with the interviewees that marriage according to the customary law is the concern of the parents. Lye & Murray (1980:112) are of the opinion that “various transactions between the families of a man and a woman are necessary to constitute the relationship ‘marriage’”. Schapera (1977:125 and 1970:134) agrees with them that the main essentials of the marriage

contract among the Tswana is the “mutual agreement between the two families concerned as reflected in the formalities of betrothal”. Marriage used to be the initiative of the boy’s parents and children had no say in this matter.

I align myself with the young generation on the other hand that it must not be the responsibility of the parents to choose a wife. The son and the daughter must make the choice. They believe that ‘a loving heart knows no bounds’. They do not want to blame the parents if things go wrong. They think that a man should stand up for his rights and fight his problems.

Concerning today’s marriage, Christianity and Western civilization have contributed a lot in marriage. It forced men to marry one wife. The high rate of divorce has left many children in the lurch. The Batswana culture entertained polygamy to avoid divorce. Younger people do not know who to trust anymore. Some have lost their identity. The partners do not trust each other but this is not the case with the young people. They regard it as the best thing because there is a certificate of proof that you have married.

Polygamy was common in the Batswana culture. People believed that this should be practised because it is their culture and it increases the family. But according to Lye & Murray (1980:112) only “wealthy men were able to marry many wives”. They also stress the point that bride wealth meant that marriage is to have control over women and their children. I agree with the young people that polygamy caused frustrations among the family. I think Western civilization has helped a lot in stopping this. A healthy happy family is what everyone needs in life. Even though polygamy was important, it must be stopped. Families are not treated the same. The husband ultimately concentrates on one or two wives, bestowing more love on them.

One may conclude this section by saying that the Batswana cultural marriage was the concern of the two families. According to them, before a marriage can take place, there must be a transfer of cattle known as lobola. Even today, when lobola is not paid, that marriage is not regarded as complete. The way they handle their kind of marriage reveals their cultural identity and is used as a marker of cultural identity.

Another important aspect in the Batswana culture is chieftainship. A tribe without a chief leads a miserable life. Everyone do whatever pleases him/her. Whenever there is a difference between a husband and a wife, such a case is referred to the chief. It is an indication that chieftaincy plays an important role in the Batswana tribe.

3.5. CHIEFTAINSHIP

In Batswana law, the head of the family (the father) is responsible for all his dependants. The chief, on the other hand, is responsible for his tribe, i.e. their needs, to feed them and help them in everything they do. The chief in his reign is assisted by various forms of council. According to the Tswana custom, chieftaincy is hereditary, passing normally from father to son. A chief is never elected but as a rule, the chief succeeds automatically to his office by right of birth. A chief is a chief because he is born to it.

According to the interviewees, it is customary that when the chief is inaugurated, the leading traditional doctors are asked to charm the body of the new chief to protect him from sorcery and give him power to rule his tribe with obedience. The leopard skin is put around his shoulders as a sign of chieftaincy. It is believed that chiefs are regarded as heroes of the tribe hence they are given the assegai and the battle-axe to protect their people during wars. The chief was highly respected and he was never addressed by his real name but he was called by the tribal name like Mokgatla or his regimental name i.e. Lethulwa. Chieftaincy plays a major role in all tribes including the Batswana.

Q. Tell me about chieftainship

They all believe that chieftainship is highly respected among the Batswana people. It is hereditary. The one who is to become a chief is the senior son of the chief. In the beginning the chief used to marry many wives. The son of the first wife is expected to become chief when his father dies. If a chief dies when the child is still young his uncle or aunt will act as chief until the new chief is old enough to be inaugurated. The Batswana do not elect a chief, but he must be the chief's biological son. The older people also indicated that "Bogosi bo a tsalelwa" (a chief must be born to it), it is their culture.

The interviewees believe that "Bogosi kupe badimo ba a bo dibela". This means that chieftainship is something that the Batswana believe the ancestors control and will protect.

Before you become a chief there is a ceremony of bringing you forth to the ancestors to protect you from all harm. A black cow was used for making the rituals for making the chief save i.e. 'kgomo e go tweng ga e jewe e berekile kgosi' (the cow that has been used to charm the chief, is left to graze without slaughtering it). After the ceremony anybody can take it, because it does not belong to the royal family anymore. If you point at the chief with your finger you immediately die because they have hardened him with strong medicine.

The interviewees all believe that the chief according to the Batswana culture is responsible for taking care of the tribe and their problems. They regard the chiefs as parents who are responsible for the family, and support them in whatever they want to do.

Q. Who in your opinion should rule or become a chief?

According to the interviewees, the person who should become a chief and rule, is the one whose father is a chief. He must come from the royal family. He must be a legitimate person to inherit the chieftaincy.

The Batswana tribe has a paramount chief who is responsible for appointing the other chiefs. If the chief has many wives and the first wife has no son, it is the duty of the paramount chief to select one son born to one of the other wives, who will be capable to lead the tribe.

They also believe that chieftaincy cannot be given to anyone. The chief may have a son by a concubine but that son cannot be chief because he has no right to succeed since his mother is not married to the chief.

Q. Which steps are taken to inaugurate the chief?

They all agree that to inaugurate the chief is something special in the life of the Batswana. Before the inauguration takes place, the paramount chief will consult his deputy and the tribal council. Thereafter they will go and inform their clans. This will form the link between the headmen, the kgotla, the paramount chief as well as the tribe.

The wishes of the tribe are also taken into consideration. They should also consider whether he is qualified to become a chief or not. He must be the rightful person to be inaugurated.

They also believe that before the inauguration, rituals must be performed using a black cow to protect the chief. Precautionary measures must also be taken. The chief must be tested somehow by the superiors.

According to the young people the only thing they know about the inauguration is that the ceremony takes place and that the chief is inaugurated by placing the skin of the leopard on his shoulders. Young people did not make mention of the medicinal charms that are used to strengthen the chief and the horn that the chief is given to protect him.

Q. What is the responsibility of the headmen of the wards, district and villages?

According to the interviewees, the work of the headmen and the wards form a link between tribal authority and the chief. Cases which are less important are handled by the headmen. Major cases are referred to the chief.

Q. Do you still practise chieftainship?

All interviewees are in favour of chieftainship. They uphold it. Their main aim is that Tswana culture must not be destroyed. They do not want to discard it. Even the young people want chieftaincy to be continued even though they feel that they do not gain much from it.

Q. What is your feeling about chieftainship?

Some believe that chieftainship should be retained. They do not want to experience lawlessness and disorder among the juveniles. They strongly believe that chieftainship demands loyalty. It demands obedience and honesty.

Some believe that chieftaincy has no future nowadays. They have a feeling that the new dispensation of local government in the villages will destroy the chieftaincy. They believe that this will deny the young generation the opportunity to learn about their culture and about chieftainship.

I agree with the interviewees that chieftainship is hereditary. Schapera (1977:53) is also of the opinion that "the chieftainship is hereditary in the male line, passing normally from father to son". The interviewees also agree with Schapera that a chief is never elected. A chief is a chief by right of birth.

The Batswana are a unique people who respect their culture. Coming to the point of who should be the ruler or chief, they strictly emphasise their culture. I agree with the interviewees and Schapera (1977:53) that “the chief succeeds automatically to his office by right of birth”. He must come from the royal family. Schapera (1977:53) like the interviewees, stresses the point that “the chief’s son by a concubine does not have the right to succeed, even if there are no legitimate descendants”.

He also agrees with the interviewees on the point of polygamy which was mostly practised by the chief. I agree with them that in the past the chief used to marry many wives. But they sometimes made a mistake about who should rule or succeed the chief. The order of succession was governed by the ranking of the wives. The first heir was the chief’s eldest son by his first wife.

Concerning the inauguration of the chief, they also agree with Schapera (1977:60) that “it was customary for the leading traditional healer of the tribe to charm the body of the new chief”. I agree with them because the Batswana believe in sorcery, and doing this, was to make sure he is well protected. They all agree on the point that the rightful chief is formally invested with a leopard skin which is draped round his shoulders as a symbol of chieftainship.

What is not clear here, is that both the interviewees and Schapera did not indicate what happens to the chief who is not a rightful person. In as far as I know he is not allowed to wear a leopard skin; he must place his feet on the leopard skin which is a symbol that the chieftainship does not belong to him.

The interviewees differ from Schapera in the sense that they believe that chieftaincy is something within the powers of the ancestors. They must protect the chief. Schapera never mentioned the ancestors. I myself agree with the interviewees. It is according to the Batswana culture that in everything we do, the ancestors come first. Our lives are rooted in them. The interviewees also agree with Schapera that the headmen are the helping hands of the chief. They report everything from the villages to the chief and they handle minor cases.

I agree with the interviewees that chieftaincy should be practised to retain the legitimacy values, such as respect for authority, succession to maintain a good system of government so that young generation would not lose touch with their culture. Tribes differ according to their culture. To maintain this, we must uphold this to make our Batswana identity clear to all the tribes. To show people that this is our culture, and that we cannot do without it.

Older people believe strongly in the custom of having a chief, the installation of the chief and the rituals performed during the inauguration. But this is not the case with the young generation. They agree with the idea of having a chief but they do not see his importance to the tribe. To them the chief appears to be an ordinary person.

In conclusion one has to stress the point that even if we are civilised and educated, we should never forget our culture. It must be there to help the upcoming generations, to be known by them. The Batswana style of handling chieftainship is very important, i.e. a chief must be born a chief, chieftainship passes from father to son. A chief is not elected but the legitimate one must rule and show a good system of government. This practice reveals the culture of the Batswana.

The Batswana traditional medicines can also be regarded as part of witchcraft. These medicines are also important in charming the chief as the Batswana culture suggests.

3.6. WITCHCRAFT

Despite the many changes brought by the missionaries, witchcraft is still rife among all the black tribes. This is still practised in a traditional way with little interference from Western culture. Witchcraft is believed to be a powerful force that can destroy people's lives, teach people to be selfish and fill the minds of innocent people with satanic ideas.

Young people believe that jealousy causes witchcraft. People who are jealous resort to witchcraft. They also believe that it is caused by evil spirits and hatred among people. Traditional Batswana people were expected to marry into their own family to avoid sorcery. They had no desire to be involved with witches or their families.

Q. Tell me a little about witchcraft

According to the interviewees witchcraft is practised at night. They know nothing about it. They believe it was used to scare people so that they would not move around at night. They believed that it is based on superstition. It must be abolished. Young people also do not believe that witchcraft exists. They have only heard about it. There is no clear information about it.

Q. Why is witchcraft so important in the life of the Batswana?

They all believe that witchcraft is part and parcel of the Batswana culture. People do not benefit anything from witchcraft. Witchcraft is only known to the witches and nobody wants to be associated with witches even if he/she is a witch. Nobody can divulge information about witchcraft to anyone who is not one of the witches.

Q. Can people benefit from witchcraft?

The interviewees believe that there is nothing that they can benefit from witchcraft except filling their lives with superstitions, unless witches change their mind and do it openly so that everyone can know about witchcraft.

Q. What is your feeling about witchcraft?

They all have one feeling, that witchcraft should be done away with altogether. It makes people mistrust each other and feel insecure. Some older people believe that if they are questioned about witchcraft, people will think that they are witches. One of them said "Ga ke moloi nna, ga ke itse sepe". (I am not a witch, I know nothing about it). They did not feel free to talk about it.

Q. Can witchcraft be reformed?

For them witchcraft can only be reformed by writing it down in books so that everyone can read about it. It must also be televised for the kids to see it. I think, if witchcraft is an evil thing, it must be stopped or improved by going to church, praying and by reading the Bible every day and by choosing good friends with good morals.

People have not seen witches. The information they have about witchcraft is what they hear from other people.

In my opinion, witchcraft is something bad that makes people fear others. It does not teach people about good things. It is an evil spirit that grows inside a person and at the end he/she is controlled by these evil spirits. Hence that person is regarded as one who practises Satanism. Most of the people do not understand exactly what witchcraft is. They just imagine it as something bad.

There is a difference between evil spirits and the ancestors. Ancestors are known as our dead parents and who can protect their descendants. But evil spirits are bad and force a person to do bad things without thinking of the positive things. But on the other hand one may say ancestors are also spirits of our dead parents, the only thing is that they are associated with good things and not bad things like evil spirits.

Witches assemble at a chosen spot to discuss their plan of action. Sometimes they just meet in order to while away time, dancing or singing their songs. According to Schapera (1977:257), "witchcraft is the malicious use of poison or magic to inflict harm upon people or their property".

The interviewees all concur that witchcraft is caused by evil spirits, hatred, jealousy and sorcerers.

They do believe that witchcraft could be important because they heard that people fly during the night. So, people can be taught to fly. How? We don't know. But on the other hand, one cannot tell whether witchcraft is important because it is kept secret.

I believe that witchcraft is no longer so important in the life of the Batswana, because it makes us feel bad and fills our minds with satanic ideas. The only thing is to refrain from witchcraft because it pushes us away from God. Christianity has played a big part in abolishing witchcraft and most of the people today are Christians.

I again agree with the people I have interviewed that witchcraft is diminishing. People do not have time to spend during the night planning to bewitch others. Time does not allow it.

For them, in order to improve witchcraft, people who are possessed by satanic spirits must be rehabilitated.

Interviewees' opinions differ in as far as witchcraft is concerned. The one group believes that there is nothing that people can gain from witchcraft except cheating people you are jealous of. It is something that is done in secret unless they change their mind and do it openly.

The other group believes that witchcraft could be important and one could benefit from it if there is somebody who can explain this. One can benefit by flying, by making lightning, for example. They do believe that witchcraft can be ascribed to the ancestors because it is believed that they can prevent illness, accidents or any evil things that can befall a person. But I disagree with that because we have never heard that witchcraft has healed anybody. The only things it does are evil things.

I align myself with others who say people should do away with witchcraft because it prevents development and improvement. It must be stopped because we are planting the bad habit of superstition. It should be discarded altogether. It need not be practised because it will mislead the upcoming generation. It makes people feel insecure.

Others feel that witchcraft should not be abolished because this forms part of their culture. The Batswana can accept civilization and transformation, but we must not forget our roots. Witchcraft is part and parcel of cultural practices, i.e. marriage customs, chieftainship, ancestors and traditional healing of the Batswana. This reveals how the Batswana behave. The only thing about witchcraft is its secrecy. No one has seen it.

Older people believe that witchcraft is one of their traditional ways of life whereas the younger people believe that it is against modern life. People have changed for the better. They do not want to make their life miserable or fill it with witchcraft. Today people believe in science and technology as they believe that it will improve their lives.

3.7. CONCLUSIONS : CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE LITERATURE AND ACCORDING TO SPOKESPEOPLE

From the above discussion it is clear that Batswana cultural identity is constituted by a distinctive range of customs which are the practices of that particular tribe as I have indicated.

It is difficult to describe the cultural identity of a tribe or nation without first taking a close look at their cultural practices. The question here is, how do they behave towards their culture; and do they practise common cultural things? Are these practices transmitted to their children? By responding to these questions, I think one can easily point out a tribe or nation's cultural identity.

The Batswana practise many distinctive cultural customs which they wholeheartedly want to instil into their children so that they can know their culture. But nowadays it is hard to say whether the youth will carry on with their culture. For them culture is solely about knowledge and nothing else. They believe that older people use culture as a weapon for life and for their best interest in whatever they do for the whole tribe.

Eagleton (2000:131) adds that "culture is not only what we live by. It is also in great measures, what we live for. Affection, relationship, memory, kingship, place, community, emotional fulfilment, intellectual enjoyment, a sense of ultimate meaning". The Batswana way of life is very different from other tribes. They have their own ways of practising their culture. These four cultural aspects enable us to distinguish the Batswana from other peoples. The interviewees also believe that they practise customs because they want to be identified as real Batswana.

For researchers to understand cultural identity, they first have to understand the word culture and its roots. Hofstede's (1991:5) perception is that "culture distinguishes the members of one group of people from another". According to my understanding, one may define cultural identity as the distinctive cultural practices of a particular tribe or group living in the same environment, sharing the same culture and ideas. By practising the same culture, people will feel that they belong somewhere and also feel unique and live meaningfully.

The Batswana marriage is not the same as the marriage of other tribes. The lobola must be paid first and only then the woman can be taken to her husband. A chief must not be elected (Schapera 1977:53). They believe that they should involve their ancestors in everything they do. The belief is very strong and their wish is to let these cultural aspects continue so that the youth can understand them and see a true picture of the Batswana customs.

Literature plays an important role in conveying culture. Most books present the culture of a particular tribe referring to certain characteristics of their culture which ultimately gives us an image of their cultural identity. Literature is important in the sense that it retains, maintains and stores our culture. Nowadays the state of our culture is changing. For securing the loss of our culture, authors took a great step world wide to store our culture in books so that it should not die. Literature is part of cultural memory. The young generations must also be able to read about their culture.

A great book deserves attention and love in return for what it gives us. They have good relationships or fruitful relationships. For me the relationship we find in literature is like that of a married couple who try to maintain their relationship when love no longer exists. When culture no longer exists among the tribes, books are there to refresh our minds about the culture that we have forgotten.

One may say that the importance of literature is to make a heightened and selective imitation of life through the medium of literary art. The value of literature depends partly upon the degree to which the imitation of life is heightened and selected.

According to Eliot quoted by Eagleton (2000:112), "culture is the way of life of a particular people living together in one place". People may come from different directions and stay in one village or tribe. Obviously those people need to adapt themselves to the cultural activities of the people they find in that village or land. As they will live together they will easily adopt the same cultural practices even though they know their culture, they will in the end lead the same way of life.

Eagleton (2000:112) stresses the point that "culture may even be described simply as that which makes life worth living". For the Batswana, their culture is very meaningful to them

because it teaches them respect, how to behave towards other people, older people and the respect for their chiefs. The life of a person was very important and people respected each other and regarded older people as their own parents. The life of a person was valued as important no matter what, that is why there were no killings in the past like today.

To define the Batswana belief as distinctive, one has to believe that the Western civilization has brought many changes, and made many Batswana Christians, even though the Batswana deep down in their hearts will not forget their culture. They know their culture and they cannot withdraw themselves from their tradition. They have in general continued to carry on with some of their cultural practices even if they are Christians and civilised. Culture directs people's lives to a special relationship in which people strongly feel that they belong, feel unique and lead an enjoyable life with respect and pride.

Eagleton (2000:55) adds that :

“indeed culture sees a direct relation between the individual and the universal. It is in the uniqueness of a thing that the world spirit can be most intimately felt, but to disclose the essence of a thing means stripping away its accidental particulars. What constitutes my own self-identity is the self-identity of the human spirit. What makes me what I am is my essence, which is the species to which I belong. Culture is itself the spirit of humanity individuating itself in specific works and its discourse links the individual and the universal, the quick of the self and the truth of humanity, without the mediation of the historically particular.”

The above quotation indicates that a person must believe in what he thinks makes himself. You must do what is unique to you so that you can feel your own self-identity and the truth of humanity. The quotation points out the relation between the culture-practising individual and the rest of the world.

For the Batswana, their culture is something very unique, something with which the young generation should be imbued so that they can be bold to boast about their tradition and have the spirit of belonging together. They must practise their culture so that they can bring out their identity to the world at large.

Hofstede (1991:5) sees culture as “an entity consisting of different levels which are interrelated”. According to the spokespeople, the four aspects of cultural identity viz. ancestors, marriage, chieftaincy and witchcraft, are interrelated. It is believed that ancestors are there to see to it that chieftainship is protected. The interviewees strongly believe in their ancestors and in everything they do. They are their protectors. All marriages are reported to the chief by way of sending a portion of meat called ‘thupa’ to the kgotla. In cultural marriages there are certain steps to be followed before announcing the complete marriage. That is lobola (transferring of cattle) and the wedding ceremonies. I agree with the interviewees that by practising your culture you identify to which society you want to belong. In other words, your cultural practices reveal your cultural identity.

From my observation the adults appear to be the ones who respect their culture. Young people are gradually moving away from their culture. Eventually they are going to lose their cultural identity as a result of the influence of Western culture and integration. It might also happen that they develop a new one, maybe a mixed culture. I think a new cultural identity is emerging among the Batswana. Today the Batswana are no longer going to the initiation school. Instead, education has taken its place. They are also involved in politics and belong to different political parties. They are no longer interested in regiments. Heroes of the past, e.g. chiefs, are no longer important to them and they prefer political heroes.

In the next chapter the focus will be on the construction of cultural identity in the selected texts, i.e. cultural identity constructed through redefining marriage customs, cultural identity and the role of the chiefs, cultural identity and honouring the ancestors and cultural identity and witchcraft and traditional healing.

CHAPTER 4

THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE SELECTED TEXTS.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural marriage plays an important role in the life of the Batswana. The aim of this section is to construct cultural identity through marriage customs, honouring ancestors, chieftainship and witchcraft. The focus will be on how these cultural aspects affect people's lives and how they cope with the challenges of their culture.

The section will focus on the construction through redefining marriage, honouring compared ancestors, the role of chiefs and witchcraft and traditional healing. All the texts will be to find out the similarities and the differences, and how much input they do have about the Batswana culture.

The preliminary survey of the role of the four cultural aspects in the selected novels will be integrated into chapter four for economy's sake and in order to eliminate repetition.

4.1. CULTURAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTED THROUGH REDEFINING MARRIAGE CUSTOMS; DINTSHONTSO TSA LORATO AND PELO E JA SERATI.

In this section the construction of cultural identity in Pelo e ja serati and Dintshontsho tsa lorato will be investigated. Attention will be paid to the way the attitudes and thinking of the characters are influenced and affected by the social environment in which they find themselves. The conflict between traditional and modern marriage customs as reflected and negotiated in the plot, setting and theme will be discussed. Attention will also be paid to the extent to which the image of marriage in these texts agree with traditional views.

The implications of living among the Batswana as a foreigner and how Dithole and Sakoma overcome their cultural problems and live up to their ambitions will be investigated. The role of ancestors and how the author explains the events will be described.

Dintshontsho tsa lorato, written by L.D. Raditladi, was published in 1967. Pelo e ja serati, written by J.M. Ntsime, was published in 1975. Both the texts are old and the characters are also traditional people who still believe strongly in their culture and practise it. The texts are both set in rural places and in the traditional past. The focus will be on marriage as one of the most important cultural aspects.

4.1.1. SUMMARY OF DINTSHONTSHO TSA LORATO

Dintshontsho tsa lorato is a tragedy in which all the main characters die in the end and it concerns itself with cultural aspects of marriage and the problem of foreigners living among the Batswana.

The text starts by introducing Sakoma (Of the song) (act 1, scene 1). Sakoma uses his guitar to express his love for Mmamotia. Mmadiphefo (Mother of the winds), his messenger, tells Sakoma that Mmamotia also loves him. Rrekgosi (Father-king), Sakoma's friend, encourages Sakoma to face Mmamotia and express his feelings for her. Sakoma meets Mmamotia (A strong woman) at the river where she accepts his proposal even though it is dangerous for her because he is not a Mongwato. She knows that the Bangwato look down on foreigners. In the complication (act 2, scene 3) Mmamotia's intention is to destroy cultural differences - they are all living at the same place under one chief - so that they can be united as one group.

Sakoma is also in love with Ponalo (Revelation). At a ceremony in preparation for Sakoma's marriage held at Sakoma's house, Mmamotia feels that she is no longer interested in Sakoma because there is nothing attractive in him. She just decides to dump him. While discussing the matter, Phane (Larva) comes in and tells Sakoma that Ponalo wants to see him immediately. While he is away, Ponalo arrives. She quarrels with Mmamotia and Mmamotia decides to leave Ponalo at Sakoma's house. Mmamotia flees Sakoma's place and seeks refuge at Kalafi's (Healer) home because she was afraid that Sakoma would kill her.

On Sakoma's return, he finds Ponalo in his house. He kills her because she is an obstacle to his marriage to Mmamotia. He hides her body in Kalafi's house where Mmamotia is sleeping. Before dawn Mmamotia goes home (act 2, scene 4, the crisis), Poloko (Securing), chases her away because she suspects her of the murder. She does not want Mmamotia to be killed at her place. Mmamotia goes back to Kalafi, who is accused of Ponalo's death. Kalafi

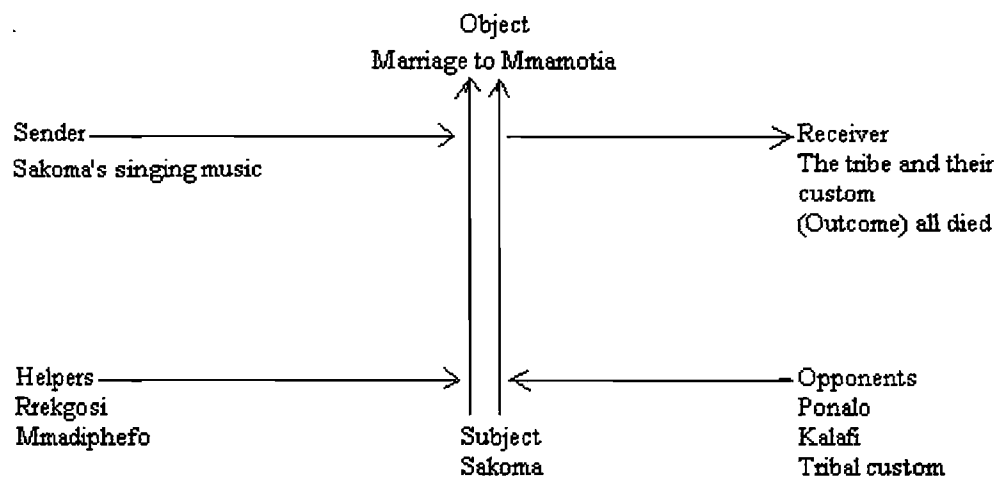
and Mmamotia arrange to run away because Kalafi is also one of the suspects. The two flee to Mokwena, a village far away, where they live as husband and wife.

The king orders an investigation into Ponalo's murder (act 2, scene 5). The investigators question Sakoma, but he tells them that he knows nothing about the murder. Later, in act 3 scene 2, Sakoma goes to Mokwena to get his lover, Mmamotia, back. On the way to Mokwena, in a monologue, he reveals that he killed Ponalo because she did not want to leave him and allow him to marry Mmamotia.

In the final act, scene 5, Modisa (Herd boy) overhears Sakoma's words and realises that he is in a fighting mood. He hurries to Mmamotia and Kalafi and warns them about Sakoma. Sakoma approaches and demands his lover back. A fight ensues during which Sakoma stabs Kalafi with an assegai. Before Kalafi collapses, he manages to grab the assegai from Sakoma and to kill him too. Mmamotia also kills herself by using the same assegai. The death of the three main characters shows how strong their love was.

ACTANTIAL ANALYSIS OF DINTSHONTSO TSA LORATO

Fig. 1. Diagram illustrating the love of the main characters.



Sakoma is the subject who strives to reach his goal by winning Mmamotia as his wife. He is assisted by his friends, Rrekgosi (Father king) and Mmadiphefo (Mother of the winds). Mmadiphefo falsely brings Sakoma under the impression that Mmamotia loves him in return. Rrekgosi also encourages him to love Mmamotia. His opponents are Ponalo, the tribal

custom of the Bangwato and Kalafi, who also wants to make Mmamotia his wife. In the end, Sakoma and Kalafi did not reach their goals. All died in their fight for Mmamotia who also committed suicide.

4.1.2. SUMMARY OF PELO E JA SERATI

Dithole (Dust) is the son of chief Serame (Frost). He wants to change his parents' ideas and the tribe's tradition of marriage by choosing his own wife. His parents want him to marry his cousin Mosidi (One who grinds), the woman who is loved by his parents and the whole tribe. Dithole makes his choice because, as the title indicates, a loving heart knows no bounds. Dithole's decision is to take Nombini, a Ndebele girl, as his future wife no matter what happens. He promises Nombini that he will protect her against his people. The Bakhudung must swallow their pride and learn that a foreigner is also a human being. The Batswana marriage rule is that a Motswana man must marry a Motswana woman; not a foreigner.

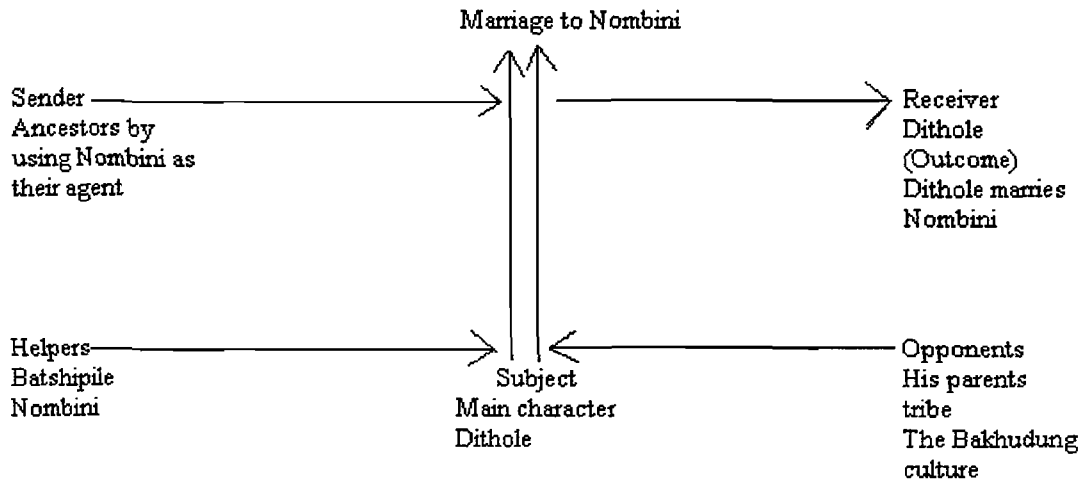
Dithole argues with his father and the headmen of the village. When the argument reaches a climax, (act 4, scene 1) his father chases him away and Dithole flees to Thaba ya Badimo (Mountain of ancestors). The ancestors play a major role here. The Batswana believe strongly in ancestors. That is why Dithole thinks of Thaba ya Badimo, because he knows that they will protect him. Nombini and her parents are also chased away. Nombini flees to the Bakhudung village and arrives at Matwetwe's (Traditional doctor) house in Phalaborwa. She is welcomed by Itereleng (Do it yourself), Matwetwe's wife who is a loving and understanding person.

With the aid of Matwetwe's medicinal charms, Nombini (Twice) rescues Dithole from Thaba ya Badimo. Nombini returns with Dithole to Bakhudung village. Dithole's parents and the tribe are happy. After Dithole's recovery he is allowed to marry Nombini because both the parents and the tribe now believe that it is the ancestors' wish. Dithole's attitude towards his parents, the society and his love of Nombini, makes one wonder what kind of person he is.

Love in Pelo e ja serati seems to be a problem to both Dithole and Nombini. They want to get married but the stumbling block is the culture that says a man's wife must be his cousin.

ACTANTIAL ANALYSIS OF PELO E JA SERATI

Fig. 2. Diagram illustrating the love between Dithole and Nombini.



The subject is Dithole who wants to marry Nombini. He breaks the rule of their custom and marries a Ndebele girl. He believes strongly that a loving heart knows no bounds. He is assisted by his friend Batshipile. His opponents are his parents, the tribe and the Bakhudung culture according to which he must marry his cousin Mosidi, as their own culture suggests. In the end Dithole and Nombini get married.

Fig. 3. TRADITIONAL CULTURE VS MODERN VIEWS IN PELO E JA SERATI

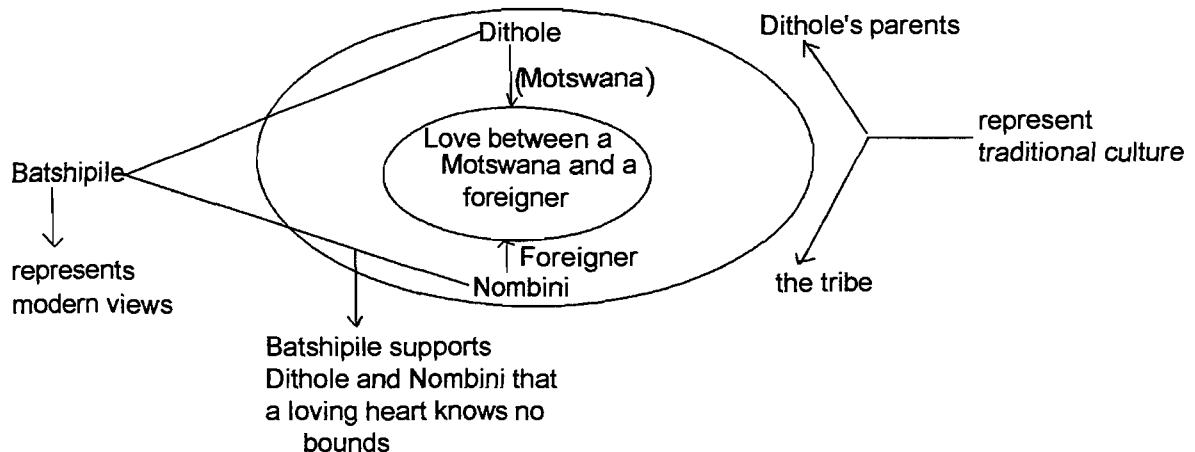


Fig. 2. Shows the difficulty of love between a Motswana and a foreigner among the Batswana tribe which believes strongly in their culture. Dithole is in love with a foreigner, Nombini. Dithole's parents and the tribe are against this because it is not according to their culture. Culture ruins everything between the two lovers. The only hope for Dithole and Nombini is Batšhipile (Dithole's friend), who advises Dithole to marry the woman he loves because a loving heart knows no bounds. The two plays portray similar problems.

4.1.3. CONFLICT AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The term conflict in drama means that "a story brings together two opposing forces and develops and resolves the struggle between these two forces" (Scott & Madden 1980:6). Both Pelo e ja serati and Dintshontsho tsa lorato show personal as well as cultural conflict. This is also noted by Jafta (1978:35-36), who writes "that there are two general types of conflict, internal and external". The conflict is raised to the universal level of conflict between evil and good in the world. Conflict, whether internal or external, initiates action which propels the play along.

According to Donahue and Kolt (1992:4), conflict is a "situation in which interdependent people express differences in satisfying their individual needs and interests and they experience interference from each other in accomplishing these goals". Mabley (1972:6) regards conflict as "the driving force of every dramatic work". Conflict is an important aspect in drama and without this, it will lose its purpose. According to Veltrusky (1997:77), "arising from variable but continual tension between the context and dialogue, the dramatic conflict has its own, intrinsic tension which mounts and decreases but never disappears until the conflict itself is resolved". It is the development of this conflict which forms the dramatic plot. Conflict begins with the motorial moment and ends with the denouement.

It is very difficult to have a tragedy in a situation where the hero takes action fully aware of what to expect. In such a situation the hero is not surprised by his miseries. In a tragic situation the hero proceeds hoping to succeed, unaware of the doom which his purposes would lead to. He only recognises the truth and the horror when it is too late. Where the hero expects success, disaster strikes. Sakoma expects to succeed in marrying Mmamotia but by the death of Ponalo and the escape of Mmamotia, everything is doomed and the play ends with death.

The conflict in Dintshontsho tsa lorato starts in act one, scene four when Mmamotia falls in love with Sakoma not knowing that he is still in love with Ponalo. Discovering his love for Ponalo, the conflict is complicated when Mmamotia tells Sakoma that she wants to break with him. She has lost interest in him.

In his speech with Batšhipile, in the exposition (act one, scene one), Dithole indicates the conflict between loving a foreigner but going against his culture.

Dithole : Ke rata ngwana wa letebele

Go leokoriba magareng a mme le mosetsana

Leo le agilweng ke mekgwa le ditso.

(I love the Ndebele child.

There is a barrier between myself and the girl,

Which is built by the behaviours and customs.) p.3

These words indicate that Dithole is aware of the conflict between his culture and loving a foreigner. His culture does not allow him to marry a Ndebele woman. He must marry his cousin according to his culture.

The conflict in Pelo e ja serati is between traditional and modern ways of life in that Dithole acts against his parents wishes and refuses to marry his cousin Mosidi. He wants to marry a woman of his own choice, Nombini. The girls and their parents in the village also help to build up the conflict. They do not want a foreigner as a queen.

The conflict in the two plays differ a bit. In Dintshontsho tsa lorato the conflict becomes acute when Mmamotia indicates that she is no longer interested in Sakoma and dumps him. Ponalo also makes matters worse by confronting Mmamotia about Sakoma's love. But in Pelo e ja serati the conflict is created by the rigid rules of Dithole's culture. According to his culture, he cannot marry a foreigner. He must marry his cousin. Dithole is aware of the situation, the tradition in his village and he knows what to expect when he falls in love with Nombini.

Like Pelo e ja serati, Dintshontsho tsa lorato also creates conflict. Mmamotia accepts the love of Sakoma, although she knows that it is against their custom. She clearly points out in the complication that:

: Keletso ya me ke go senya tlhaolelo,
 Go supa fa mhaladi a tshwana le Mongwato,
 Fa ka ntata ya tseo merafe e e ka kopana,
 Ya bofagana jaaka ngatana ya dikgong.
 (My intention is to do away with division,
 To show that a stranger is the same as a Mongwato,
 Because of the marriage tribes may unite,
 May be joined like a bundle of wood.) p.27

The above quotation shows that Mmamotia would like to prove that foreigners are also human beings and that all people are equal before the law and they must all enjoy the same rights, which stresses sameness in the society. That is why she would like to be married to a foreigner irrespective of their cultural difference, a thing that led to conflict in the family and inner conflict in Mmamotia. She is faced with two opposing forces, her love for Sakoma and her loyalty to their culture which forbids a Mongwato to marry a foreigner or stranger.

Raditladi and Ntsime's traditional tribal settings enable them to create a favourable and acceptable conflict so that the readers are easily convinced. Mmamotia's sayings indicate that she is not happy with the restrictions of her culture. She would like to break the rules that prevent her from marrying Sakoma. Her negotiation of these cultural rules leads to the death of Ponalo and the deaths of the main characters. She needed unity among tribes and the solution to that is marriage. But she immediately abandons the idea of marriage after act 2, scene 1. The play seems to indicate that the rules are too strong to be broken, and attempting to do that, leads to tragedy.

The crisis in Pelo e ja serati occurs when Dithole enters into an argument with his father and the other men of the village, when Itumeleng (Be happy) says:

Re ka se laolwe ke ngwana re mo tsetse.
 Mosimanyana yo o tshwanetse go tsenngwa mo tseleng
 (We cannot be controlled by our own child

This boy must be shown the way.) p.53

Dithole's parents expel him from the tribe until he makes up his mind. According to Dithole's parents, their culture allows them to choose a wife for their son. Serame also indicates this by his uncontrollable anger when he tells Dithole that:

Serame : Tloga fa ntšwa ke wena!

(Go away, you dog!) p.55

Dithole feels that the decision of his parents and the headmen is not right. He feels that what was started must be completed. There is no turning back. He feels that he would rather disappoint his father and tell him the truth. But according to the Batswana culture you remain a child as long as you have not been initiated. That is why in the above paragraph Dithole is expected to obey and follow the instructions of his parents. Refusing to do that means you are regarded as unlawful and an outcast. Dithole explains this in the complication act 4, scene 1 when he is told to marry his cousin.

Dithole: Mosadi wa me ke wa pelo ya me,

Mosadi wa me ga se wa morafe,

Ke wa me ka a nkgapile maikutlo.

A ke Letebele kana ga se Letebele.

Mosadi wa me ke yo ke mo ratang ka pelo yotlhe,

Nombini ke mo rata ka pelo yotlhe,

Fa ke sa mo nyale ke swa le ena.

(My wife is the one I have chosen,

My wife is not for the tribe,

She is mine because I love her.

Whether she is a Ndebele or not

My wife is the one I love with all my heart.

I love Nombini with all my heart,

If I don't marry her, we will die together.) p.55

Dithole reacts differently. He would like to marry someone he loves and not be bound by custom. This indicates conflict between Dithole and the tribe: he wants to do what is right for his heart but not for the tribe.

Dithole does not care about their culture. He decides to express his feelings. That he will lose the chieftainship is less important to him at this stage. Traditionally he is supposed to succeed his father as chief. But Dithole is prepared to become chief and live among his people only on condition that he be permitted to marry a Ndebele girl, Nombini. Nombini loves Dithole and she is the one he chooses because a loving heart knows no bounds. The above quotation clearly explains this.

Dintshontsho tsa lorato also shows the crisis where Mmamotia flees the Bangwato village and seeks refuge at Mokwena.

Mmamotia : A fatshe la dipogiso, lefatshe la rona!

Ke tshwara fa, Mmamotia, ke tshware phoroka,

Le morafe wa gaetshe ga o na go mpoloka,

Basadi ba mono ba tla re ke sebatana,

Mmamotia ke a itia fa ke titatita.

A re tshabe, Kalafi, mabaka a rona a thata!

(Oh! our land of cruelty, our land!

I touch here, Mmamotia, I am unlucky

Even my tribe will not protect me,

Women of our land will say I am an animal,

Mmamotia, I am wasting my time when I stay

Let us run, Kalafi, our problems are increasing) p.37

Here Mmamotia explains that what has happened does not speak well of her. All the people will hate her for this and they will regard her as an animal, or an uncivilised one. The best thing for her is to flee.

Young people no longer like to behave according to their culture. Mmamotia turns her back on it and agrees to be married to a foreigner, Sakoma. She flees to Mokwena. On the other hand one may think that Mmamotia is afraid to be accused of Ponalo's death.

The climax occurs when Sakoma arrives at Mokwena where he fights Kalafi and kills him.

Sakoma: Ke ikutlwa ke tsenwa ke sedidi.

Tsididi se taboga ditshikeng tsa me.
 Ke utlwa tumo mo ditsebeng tsa me.
 Le fa o fema jaana ke tla go bolaya!
 (I feel as if I am dizzy.
 The coldness runs through my veins
 I hear sounds in my ears.
 That even if you protect yourself, I will kill you!) p.77

Both texts indicate the ability of the author to create convincing characters and to structure the events in such a way that they are meaningful. Important issues are at stake. This play ends on a tragic note because Sakoma, Mmamotia and Kalafi all die in the end. One may say that this is their punishment for interfering with the rules or customs of the tribe. This indicates that everyone has to take responsibility for his/her deeds in the end.

This tragic outcome of the plot is the result of the characters' nature and the choices they make.

4.1.4. PLOT AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The term 'plot' refers to the manner in which the author structures the events in a text from the exposition to the conclusion.

In Dintshontsho tsa lorato, the tension rises when Mmamotia and Ponalo quarrel over Sakoma. Ponalo in this regard says:

Lefatshe leno la rona le rwele bokete
 Bana ba maabane mono ba ipitsa basadi
 Ka ba sala banna morago ba sa rate,
 E re ba gakololwa ba tsholole dikeledi.
 Nyalo ga e nankelwe ke ngwana a buduletse.
 (Our land has problems
 Children of yesterday call themselves women
 They go after men against their will.
 When you remind them, they cry.
 Marriage is not child's play.) p.22

The above quotation indicates that Ponalo is jealous of Mmamotia. Maybe she is afraid that Mmamotia is more beautiful than she is. She accuses Mmamotia of being a child who knows how to take other people's men.

Marriage unites a male and female and develops a strong family. If Mmamotia marries Sakoma, the possibility arises that the Bangwato and foreigners will unite and resolve their cultural differences and make one united nation.

After the quarrel, Mmamotia flees from Sakoma's house and arrives at Kalafi's house. It is important to notice that Ponalo is aware of the problem. According to Batswana tradition very careful measures are taken when looking for a wife. The family from which the wife comes would be scrutinised thoroughly to check their demeanour.

Mmamotia : Ke itse sephiri sa ga Sakoma sotlhe

Ke bonye se se ntseng se ntshabisa

A ngwanyana yo montle o matlho a dikgara

Ponalo! Sakoma! maina a ga ke a rate

Ga ke rate beng ba ona, ga ke ba rate!

(I know the whole secret of Sakoma

I have seen what I have been afraid of

What a beautiful girl, with big eyes!

Ponalo! Sakoma! I don't like these names!

I don't like the owners of these names, I don't like them!) p.24

Here Mmamotia suspects that Sakoma might have another girlfriend as he is fond of women. After realising that Sakoma is still in love with Ponalo, the idea of leaving him becomes much stronger because she knows the secret. Mmamotia becomes jealous when she realises that Sakoma also loves Ponalo. This causes a spirit of animosity in Mmamotia. As far as she is concerned, their culture allows someone to marry only one woman. Maybe Sakoma does this purposefully because of his culture, of marrying many women. This indicates a difference in the degree of commitment between Sakoma and Mmamotia.

The above paragraph implies that Sakoma is a playboy . Perhaps these women are attracted by the melody of his guitar. As far as Batswana culture is concerned, he is supposed to have only one wife. Only the chief and wealthy men are allowed to take more than one wife because they know they would be able to support them. A man can take a second wife if the first one cannot have children or if the first wife dies.

Dintshontsho tsa lorato does not reveal much details of a Batswana cultural marriage. Sakoma claims that Mmamotia is his wife, but there is no transfer of lobola. No marriage rule is being applied. The main thing that plays a part here is the tribal rule that a foreigner cannot marry a Mongwato woman.

This play ends on a tragic note because Sakoma, Mmamotia and Kalafi all die in the end. One may say that this is their punishment for interfering with the rules or customs of the tribe. This indicates that everyone eventually has to take responsibility for his/her deeds.

4.1.5. CHARACTERS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The focus in this section is on scenes which reveal the inner nature of the main characters and how they strive to maintain, strengthen or even change their cultural identity. Characters in a drama play an important role. The dialogue and the actions taken by the characters develop the plot.

Serudu (1987:329) remarks as follows :

“Among the many devices a dramatist uses to achieve total communication are his characters. Characters in a drama can be regarded as agents through whose nature, actions and interactions the dramatist signals the meaning, or theme or message of his work. The selection and delineation of characters, their grouping, possible separation and regrouping, are all part and parcel of the comprehensive code of the drama”.

The characters in a drama, through their dialogue, play an important part in conveying the meaning and the theme of the drama.

In Dintshontsho tsa lorato, (Act one, scene two) Sakoma proposes to Mmamotia, but she raises different objections perhaps to find out whether Sakoma really loves her. She tells him that a foreigner has no love and she cannot be loved by a foreigner.

Sakoma does not give up. He tells Mmamotia :

Sakoma : Mmamotia, lorato ga lo na mmala,
 Lorato ga lo na ngwana le mogolo
 ga lo na kgosi le motlhanka le mhaladi
 (Mmamotia, love has no colour
 love has no child nor an adult
 It has no chief nor a slave nor a foreigner.) p.12

From the cultural point of view, before the chief, people are the same. One should not be judged by his colour or nationality. People are the same.

In Dintshontsho tsa lorato, Sakoma states clearly that he loves Mmamotia but he is afraid that she is a daughter of the Bangwato and the only problem is that he is a foreigner. Rrekgosi also stresses that Sakoma must not forget that he is a foreigner. He cannot marry a Mongwato girl. Mmamotia, (p.11) also reminds him that he must not forget that she is a Mongwato daughter, the child of important people in the Bangwato tribe. She cannot afford to fall in love with a foreigner. She further explains that she could have listened to him if he had not been a foreigner. A foreigner has no love. Her tribe cannot accept this, it can be the biggest mistake of her life. Mmamotia also mentions that they cannot run away from tribal divisions. Birds of the same feather flock together. But on the other hand Rrekgosi convinces Mmamotia that before the chief people are the same. There is no difference between a Mongwato and a foreigner.

Mmamotia (Strong woman) does not want to show Sakoma that she loves him but she keeps on raising problems. She says :

Mmamotia : Tlhaolele re tla e pota kae
 Kana nonyane tsa phuka di rura mmogo.
 (How are we going to deal with apartheid
 Birds of the same feather flock together.) p.12

In the same act, (scene 4), Mmamotia, however, suddenly changes her mind about her love for Sakoma. She tells him that she is no longer interested in him. She says:

Mmamotia : Ga ke dumele fa ke go rata.

(I don't believe I love you.) p.8

Mmamotia also stresses this point by saying that:

Dilo tsotlhe ga di a siama;

Ga ke kgatlhiwe ke sepe mo go wena.

(Things are not right.

I don't like anything about you.) p.18

The sudden change in Mmamotia brings suspense in Sakoma. She realises that she has made a mistake by falling in love with Sakoma. She is a Motswana woman and she cannot marry a foreigner. Her parents will not accept that. Her culture does not allow marriage to a foreigner. This is not proper.

Sakoma becomes very angry and decides that in order to marry Mmamotia, he must kill Ponalo. After the death of Ponalo, Mmamotia and Kalafi run away to Mokwena. The play shows that the rule of the Batswana that a Motswana woman or man cannot marry a foreigner cannot be changed, and that trying to do that leads to tragic consequences.

The author warns Mmamotia and Kalafi about their death by sending a message via the herd boy. By killing herself, Mmamotia indicates that she has truly not been in love with Sakoma, because she commits suicide for Kalafi. She is also afraid of Sakoma's eyes in act 1, scene 4, when she tells him that he disgusts her. She tells him that his eyes are not those of a lover. This is where the complication begins.

Mmamotia tells Sakoma to leave her.

Mmamotia : Ke batla gore o nkgolole

Ke fofele kwa godimo jaaka leeba

Ke tswe mo ketaneng ya go go tshaba

(I want you to release me

To fly very high like a dove

And be released from the chain of being afraid of you.) p.19

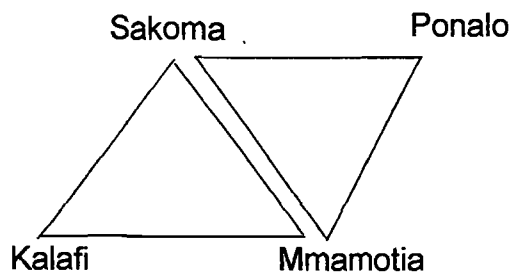
One may conclude that another reason why Mmamotia leaves Sakoma is that she is afraid of him.

4.1.5.1. GENERAL REMARKS ON CHARACTERS, THEIR NAMES AND THE LOVE TRIANGLES

Introduction

In every literary text the author creates his own characters and gives them names that they will act according to them. Sakoma (of the song), as his name suggests, takes advantage of his music to conquer women's hearts. That is why he fell in love with both Ponalo and Mmamotia and this love triangle ends in a tragedy.

Fig. 1. LOVE TRIANGLES IN DINTSHONTSHO TSA LORATO



The above diagram shows the love triangles between the main characters in Dintshontsho tsa lorato. Sakoma falls in love with Mmamotia while he is still in love with Ponalo. After the murder of Ponalo, Kalafi escapes with Mmamotia and falls in love with her. The love of Mmamotia and Sakoma causes the death of all the main characters, viz. Sakoma, Mmamotia and Kalafi.

Sakoma (Of the song) attracts women with his music. He first falls in love with Ponalo (Revelation). When Sakoma falls in love with Mmamotia (A strong woman), Ponalo becomes so jealous and angry that she confronts Mmamotia.

4.1.5.2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MMAMOTIA'S CHARACTER

To celebrate the fact that Mmamotia has decided to return his love, Sakoma holds a party at his home (Act one, scene three). This leads to disaster, however, as Mmamotia discovers that he is still in love with Ponalo. In the next scene she confronts Sakoma on this issue and ends their relationship. This makes Sakoma so angry that Mmamotia becomes afraid of him. In the midst of their quarrel Sakoma is called away by a messenger from Ponalo. In the final scene of act 1, scene 5, Ponalo then returns to Sakoma's house and confronts Mmamotia. Ponalo is in a very bad mood. She tells Mmamotia that :

Ponalo : Ke itsile ke tla go fitlhela fa;
 Ke itsile Sakoma o bothale;
 O kae? Mpolelele ka bofefo!
 (I knew I would find you here
 I knew Sakoma was clever
 Where is he? Tell me quickly!) p.22

Still in a bad mood, Ponalo asks Mmamotia what she wants in Sakoma's house. But Mmamotia answers Ponalo boldly, saying :

Mmamotia : Ke batla se wena o se batlang.
 (I want what you want.) p.22

Ponalo does not condone Mmamotia and Sakoma's marriage because she is still in love with him. She feels that Sakoma has betrayed her. Mmamotia indicates that she is no longer interested in Sakoma maybe because she noticed that Ponalo loves Sakoma. She says to Sakoma (act one, scene four) :

Mmamotia : O itse basadi bontsi ba a go rata.
 (You know that most women love you.) p.119

Maybe the situation forced her to hate Sakoma so she decides to stop their love affair. She cannot stand to share Sakoma with another woman.

Kalafi is trying to help and Mmamotia falls in love with him. The name Mmamotia has a symbolic meaning, i.e. a strong woman. She feels brave enough to tell Sakoma that she is not interested in him. Nothing attracts her. She is also not afraid of Ponalo when confronting her.

She is not afraid to flee with a stranger. Mmamotia and Kalafi flee to Mokwena in order to avoid Sakoma. Kalafi and Sakoma kill each other and Mmamotia kills herself.

The manner in which Mmamotia leaves Sakoma is surprising. This indicates the inner conflict that Mmamotia has. She thinks that falling in love with Sakoma will bring her a fruitful life only to find that she has made a mistake. She is afraid that her people will not condone that and that she could in the end lose her lover. The escape of Mmamotia and Kalafi also brings about an unpleasant situation and leaves people in confusion, not knowing who killed Ponalo. The decision taken by Mmamotia indicates that she does not love Sakoma as he is a foreigner. It is against her custom to be married to a foreigner. She feels that Sakoma will be rejected by the community, i.e. the tribe will not condone their marriage.

Ponalo falsely accuses Mmamotia that she is a clever child and that she is just like an axe that separates men from their women, since their men run after Mmamotia. Mmamotia hotly denies that, but the exchange of words between Ponalo and Mmamotia propels Mmamotia to leave Ponalo at Sakoma's house, and to seek refuge in the nearest open house, which happens to be Kalafi's house

In act two, scene one, Mmamotia is saved by Kalafi (a healer) from Sakoma. She asks him if she can hide in his house, saying that somebody is chasing her.

A last very important scene that reveals Mmamotia's character is act five, scene four. In the previous scene, Sakoma has expressed his plans to kill Kalafi and take Mmamotia back. In scene two Kalafi relates a dream which is a premonition of his own death. In reaction to that, Mmamotia admits in act 5, scene 2 that she and not Kalafi should rather die because she is a bad person. She is the one who caused Kalafi to leave his house.

Mmamotia : Bogolo ba ka bitsa nna yo o bosula,

Yo ke go lathlisitseng legae la gago.

(They had better call me, the one who is bad

I am the one who caused you to leave your home.) p.71

Here Mmamotia is willing to take the punishment because she is the one who caused Kalafi trouble.

In Act four, scene one, Sakoma arrives at Mokwena looking for Kalafi and Mmamotia to take his revenge. In the same act, scene five at Mokwena, the play reaches its tragic climax- Sakoma kills Kalafi, saying that :

Sakoma : Utlwa tshipi ya lerumo, Kalafi,
 Kwa gaeng la rona o rile o seganka!
 (Hear the iron of the assegai, Kalafi,
 At our home you said you are brave!) p.77

Kalafi also manages to kill Sakoma and Mmamotia commits suicide. The assegai in this quotation indicates that Kalafi has reason to die because he stole Sakoma's woman. It also indicates that brave and kind men like Kalafi sometimes die when they try to offer assistance or help to people who are desperate. On the other hand one may say that the image of the assegai reveals the character of Sakoma viz. that he is cruel and wants all the people to die.

4.1.5.3. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SAKOMA'S CHARACTER

In Dintshontsho tsa lorato, the events centre around the main character, viz. Sakoma. He is a kind of man who loves women. His way of proposing love to a woman is unique. He is in love with Ponalo, but at the same time with Mmamotia, a Mongwato girl. But Sakoma forgets that he is a foreigner and that he cannot marry a Mongwato woman.

Sakoma is on the horns of two dilemmas. He is faced with the problem of the Bangwato culture, and the problem of loving two women. The pressure of Rrekgosi (father-king) that he must be brave to tell Mmamotia that he loves her, the fact that he is a foreigner, and the challenges of Mmadiphefo (winds) that Mmamotia loves him, causes Sakoma to act rashly. But because of his love for Mmamotia, he ignores all these obstacles and tells Mmamotia that he loves her.

This situation indicates that Sakoma is an impulsive person who might react violently and that is why Mmamotia is running away from him. Sakoma follows Mmamotia to Kalafi's place but Kalafi refuses to tell him where Mmamotia is.

In Act two, scene five, at Kalafi's place, the plot reaches a crisis where the consequences of killing Ponalo come out very strongly. Ponalo is found dead in Kalafi's house. In Act three, scene one, the councillors investigate the death of Ponalo. Sakoma is confronted with the death of Ponalo, but he denies all knowledge about it :

Sakoma : A ke nna Modimo ke laolang dintsho tsa batho!

Kana mmadi wa naledi tsa matshelo a bona?

(Am I the God who controls the death of people!

Or the counter of the stars of their lives?) p.40

In the next scene (act three, scene two) Sakoma and Rrekgosi attend the hearing and Rrekgosi advises him to make his escape. After Sakoma has left, Rrekgosi makes a very important assessment of Sakoma's character in a soliloquy (p.42 - 43). He reveals just how strong Sakoma's ambition is. He says that Sakoma has always indicated that he will kill everyone who stands in his way. Sakoma will protect Mmamotia and Rrekgosi also remarks that Sakoma will strip away everyone like leaves on a tree in order to be the only man among the women. As a true friend of Sakoma, Rrekgosi reveals the truth about Sakoma's character.

From these words it seems as if Sakoma does not care about Ponalo's death, but in scene two, he tells Rrekgosi that he must escape.

Sakoma : Rra ke go utlwile ka tsebe tsotlhe.

O sale le Modimo ke a tsamaya.

(Sir, I heard you with all ears.

You must remain with God, I am leaving.) p.42

The investigation of the court into Ponalo's death (act three, scene four) reveals Sakoma's inner character. It shows that Sakoma is an impulsive person who reacts violently when he is provoked. The hearing of the tribal court also reveals that Sakoma has no respect for tribal councillors. When the councillors ask him about the death of Ponalo, he answers rudely that he is not God who controls people's lives.

Sakoma is secretive. He does not tell Mmamotia that he is still in love with Ponalo. He also does not tell the councillors that he is the one who killed Ponalo.

As a foreigner, Sakoma is supposed to behave well but he forgets that. This is also indicated by the tribe saying that :

Tiro : Ga twe Sakoma o setse a itebetse

O batla go gapa ono motse

Lefatshe o batla go le ja boswa.

(They say Sakoma has forgotten himself.

He wants to take over this village

The land he wants to inherit it.) p.43

The above quotation shows the bad gossip of the councillors. Sakoma does not actually want to take over the village but he is trying to protect himself against the angry tribe by being rude to them.

The chief also reveals his character by helping Sakoma's parents to look for their son. He is a model of the Batswana view that a good chief must be supportive of his tribe.

The quarrel between Ponalo and Mmamotia, the escape of Kalafi (healer) with Mmamotia, and the questions of the headman make Sakoma very strong. He decides that the only way to be with Mmamotia is to kill or destroy anything or anyone who is standing in his way. He will not leave any stone unturned. He kills Ponalo because she is a stumbling block to him and flees to Mokwena to kill Kalafi. Sakoma also dies in this incident.

The same cultural problem is found in Pelo e ja serati where Dithole cannot marry Nombini because she is a foreigner.

4.1.5.4 A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DITHOLE'S CHARACTER

Pelo e ja serati deals with the same problem of love between a Motswana and a foreigner. At the beginning, Pelo e ja serati (Act one, scene one, at the river) the author presents Dithole to us, expressing his feelings of love for Nombini, a Ndebele woman.

From the dialogue, we realise that it is not Dithole alone who is against the irrational rule. Batšhipile (Dithole's friend) is also against that and persuades Dithole to move on and he will support him.

Batšhipile : Molekane, a mekgwa le ditso ditshipisiwe

Se sa feleng se a be se tlhola.

Mekgwa le ditso di tshwanetse go fela

Ga tsena tsa mekgwa ya gompiono boemong.

(My friend, let our tradition and culture be disappointed

Things that do not end, are surprising

Our law and culture must come to an end

Let the culture of today be introduced.) p.4

Batšhipile and Dithole here want to abandon their culture. They want to change the rule that a Motswana man must marry his cousin. They believe that Dithole's marriage to Nombini can change the hard rules of their culture. In the end the strict rules of the Batswana are abandoned and Dithole marries Nombini. Dithole and Nombini negotiate a new rule but place themselves in a dangerous position.

Batšhipile meets Dithole act 1, scene 1 at the river side during midday. Dithole is speaking alone that he loves Nombini, the Ndebele girl. Still in act 1, scene 1, Dithole explains his mission to Batšhipile. He wants to remove the barriers between the tribe of Bakhudung and foreigners and the tribal politics in order to show that foreigners are also human beings. Dithole's parents' problems begins when he is determined to make a success of his choices in life and he eventually gets stuck with his culture. Unable to cope with the reality of a painful life, he flees to Thaba ya Badimo for protection. The problem is that Dithole is a Motswana and he wants to marry a foreigner, Nombini, but his culture does not allow that because of their different identities.

Dithole : Ke rata ngwana wa Letebele

Mme pelo ya me e rotha madi

Go lekoriba magareng a me le mosetsana.

(I love the Ndebele child

But my heart is very sore

There is a barrier between me and the girl.) p.3

In Pelo e ja serati, Batšhipile stresses that a foreigner is also a person. Nombini only differs from them in her language. People must learn to accept that. In the end (act six, scene four)

Itumeleng, the chief's younger brother, says that Dithole and Nombini must not cry because the tribe has seen their mistakes, so they want to arrange Dithole and Nombini's marriage. Dithole and Nombini will rule the tribe because this is the wish of the ancestors.

Dithole is the only son of chief Serame. His parents and the tribe expect him to be his father's successor. As a man of change, he wants to marry a wife of his own choice.

According to his customs, Dithole is bound to marry Mosidi. He wants to prove to his parents and the tribe that a foreigner is also a human being. He would rather die than marry a girl he does not love. Foreigners play an important role in the play. The Dlamini family as foreigners develop the plot and the conflict. Dithole's parents and the tribe are not in favour of the marriage of Dithole and Nombini. They do not feel that they can respect her as the wife of the chief because she is not a Motswana. They misjudge Nombini's personality and her culture. In the end (act 6, scene 4) Nombini proves herself by rescuing Dithole.

After the argument with his father, Dithole flees to the mountain of the ancestors because he feels that what his parents are trying to do is wrong. The rescue by Nombini is like a dream come true, because he is finally able to marry Nombini, the woman of his choice. This finally proves that Dithole is a man of his word, since he does not change his mind about marrying Nombini even if his parents are against that.

The tribe of the Bakhudung strongly believes in the ancestors. The disappearance of Dithole to the mountain of ancestors is not a surprise. They believe that the ancestors will protect him.

Dithole has respect for his parents. This is indicated where he handles the argument with his parents. When his mother advises him that according to their culture, Mosidi is his wife, he answers politely that he cannot marry Mosidi and he cannot do as his mother wishes. He does not deny the fact that Mosidi is a good woman but he believes that a loving heart knows no bounds.

The plot indicates that Dithole's father is dissatisfied with Dithole's decision. He is unable to understand and accept what Dithole is trying to accomplish by marrying a foreigner and he says :

Serame : O ntheela eng o re ntate

Ka o le seganana o gana taolo

O gana molao wa batsadi ba gago.

(Why do you call me father

As you are a nuisance and you refuse to be controlled

You don't want to be controlled by your parents.) p.9.

These words indicate that Dithole's father thinks that has lost respect for his father. Respect and good behaviour is at stake here. In the Batswana culture, respect for older people or parents plays an important part. Every child or person should learn how to respect his/her elders.

Dithole becomes very distressed by his father's words. He does not want to argue further with his father because he (Dithole) is very angry. Dithole expresses his emotions and tells his parents that he wants to marry the woman that he loves and the woman of his choice.

Dithole is in conflict with traditional views. He does not like the marriage rule that says you must marry your cousin because he loves someone whom he has chosen himself. He does not want to be given a wife whom he does not love. He likes Mosidi as his cousin but not as his wife. He wants to get rid of this idea of cultural marriage.

The tension rises further in act two, in which the whole tribe turns against Dithole and Nombini. The girls from the village and their parents also indicate that they are jealous of Nombini and they do not want her to marry Dithole. They fear that if Dithole were to marry Nombini, they would be ruled by the Ndebele.

MmaLefufa : Bogosi ba rona bo tllile go nyelela.

Gonne re tla be re buswa ke matebele le matebejana.

(Our chieftainship will diminish

Because the Ndebele will be ruling us.) p.23

The quotation above indicates that it is jealousy and the strong belief in protecting their culture that governs the society. Their chieftainship cannot be destroyed and no one can take it from them.

Dithole's arguments do not mean anything to his parents. They feel that they have been betrayed by their own child. If Dithole were to marry Nombini, it would detract from their dignity as leaders of the tribe. The future chief must have power over his people. They are afraid that the Bakhudung people will think that they have not brought their son up well and taught him good manners and that they are unable to control their child.

In act 4, scene 1, the plot reaches its climax. The conflict between Dithole and his father comes out strongly. Dithole is chased away and flees to Thaba ya Badimo. The father abandons his son. Anger propels Dithole to go against his parents' wishes. He tries to control his aggression by leaving the village because his parents will never accept his wife as she is a foreigner. Serame throws a stick at Dithole. He does not want to show Dithole that even if he made him angry, he still loves him as his son. He just wants to show Dithole that as the father he has the right to choose a wife for him. The refusal of his parents indicates total ignorance because no one can choose a wife for a man, but according to the tradition this was possible.

4.1.5.5. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF NOMBINI'S CHARACTER

The girls in the village pressurise Nombini about her love for Dithole. But Nombini responds harshly indicating that Dithole cannot ask for her love because she is a foreigner. She says Dithole will never marry her because the Bakhudung look down on foreigners. Even though Nombini deep down knows that she loves Dithole, she indicates that there is a strong barrier made by the law and rules of the Batswana. So, they must be happy because he will marry a Motswana, not her.

This indicates that the marriage of Dithole and Nombini is not proper according to their culture. A foreigner cannot become a chief's wife. Their cultures are not the same and their cultural identity will differ. According to Batswana culture, the chief's wife is also the tribe's wife. It is the duty of the parents and the society/tribe to see that the chief obeys this rule and marries a Motswana woman or his cousin as his culture suggests.

The separation of Dithole and Nombini indicates a generation gap among the Bakhudung. They cannot accept Nombini because she is a Ndebele. Their culture does not accommodate foreigners.

At the end of the play (act four), where Nombini charms Dithole, the author shows how characters can change and bring about a positive attitude among people. The tribe finally agrees that Dithole may marry Nombini.

Morafe : Kgosi a ba nyalane

Morwa kgosi o rudile

Nombini, mohumagadi

(Chief, let them marry

The chief's son is alive

Nombini, the chief's wife) p.99.

The sudden change in attitude amongst the villagers is somewhat puzzling. The question is, have the Bakhudung forgotten that Nombini is a foreigner? Have they forgotten that they cannot mix their culture with other cultures? The same question can be applied to the love of Mmamotia and Sakoma. Does Mmamotia forget that Sakoma is a foreigner and that it is against their tradition to fall in love with him? Surely the author wants to indicate that people can change or need to change their attitude and treat other people, especially foreigners, in an acceptable manner. In the end, Dithole's parents and the whole tribe change and become new people altogether. In the end Nombini and Dithole get married as a sign of a new order.

Even though the tribe agrees that Dithole could marry Nombini, Lefufa, who was jealous, remains opposed to the marriage, saying :

Lefufa : Sisi! Selo se, se a tsenwa se!

O gopola gore Dithole a ka fola

A ba a nyala ngwana wa motho?

(Sis! this thing is mad

She thinks that Dithole can recover

and marry a person?) p.98

But eventually she agrees that because she is mad she can marry a Ndebele. She does not care about Dithole anymore because he is no longer in his full senses.

In act five, scene one, the plot reaches its denouement. Nombini arrives at Matwetwe's place at Phalaborwa. She is a loving and a trustworthy person. In scenes two, three and four, Matwetwe helps Nombini to bring her lover back. The Batswana are fond of traditional healers because they believe they can protect them. Nombini also believes that Matwetwe can help her.

In act 6 the conclusion is reached. In scene two Nombini goes to the Mountain of the ancestors to rescue Dithole. In scene four, Nombini charms Dithole. In the last two scenes, the tribe is happy. Dithole and Nombini and her parents are welcomed back by the tribe. Dithole marries Nombini. They forget the cultural rule that says a Motswana man cannot marry a foreigner. They are willing to suspend the strict rules of the Batswana culture in the case of Dithole and Nombini because they believe that they cannot go against their ancestors.

4.1.5.6. SETTING, TIME AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

According to Brookes, Purser and Warren (1975:887), "setting is the physical background, the element of place in literature." Ntsime's places involves a real rural environment. He introduces characters in a place like Bakhudung village and also in Phalaborwa, Marumasweu and Thaba ya Badimo where tradition plays an important role. Ntsime also regards Dithole's parents as people who are associated with tradition, who force Dithole to marry his cousin Mosidi.

Raditladi also centres his characters in traditional places like GaMmangwato and Mokwena (The place of the crocodile). These settings provide us with an excellent picture of places where people are still rooted in tradition. Modisa (Herd boy) is in the forest looking for cattle. Raditladi places Sakoma at Mokwena to take his woman back. A place like Mokwena (place where the crocodiles live) conveys the idea that it can be used as a place to hide, just like crocodiles hide in the water. The crocodile is also a traditional totem.

In Pelo e ja serati, Ntsime places the characters in Bakhudung Village, Phalaborwa Village, Marumasweu and Thaba ya Badimo. Thaba ya Badimo is a place of their ancestors where

Dithole knows he will be safe. The ancestors will protect him. Phalaborwa is where Nombini gets medicines from the traditional healer Matwetwe who made it possible for her to get back her lover. But the rural environment is in contrast with modern customs since both Dithole and Nombini believe that a loving heart knows no bounds.

Pelo e ja serati exemplifies two temporal orientations : an orientation towards the past and tradition, and an orientation towards the present and modernity.

Some events and some of the characters represent the customs and traditions of the tribe. Dithole's parents, the headmen of the village and the tribe represent tradition. Dithole's mother in the exposition act 1, scene 2 wants Dithole to marry his cousin Mosidi. His parents want to choose a wife for him, and in this regard his mother says:

Nteseng: O tlhotse kae, Dithole ngwanaka?

Ke tlhotse ke go batla ka matlho a mahibidu

Ke re o tle o bone ntsalao, Mosidi

Ke ne ka bona a nkgatlha e le ruri

(Where have you been, Dithole, my child?

I have been looking for you the whole day

I wanted you to see your cousin, Mosidi.

I was really impressed by her.) p.7

Serame adds :

Ngwanaka, mmago o a bua fa a riana

Se ke maikaelelo a rona.

Re batla go bona lelapa la gago

Le tiile, le kitlanye

Le kgona go retelela merwalela ya botshelo

(My child, your mother is telling the truth.

This is our aim

We want to see your family,

be strong and firm,

and overcome the problems of life.) p.11

Serame wants a better future for his son. He wants him to marry a good wife and have a strong, happy family.

The Batswana believe that a wife chosen by one's parents will lead to a good and healthy family, since they only make a choice after a thorough study of the girl's family, taking into account their conduct and behaviour. For Mosidi's parents it meant prestige to have their daughter married to Dithole.

The society plays an important role in transmitting the values, norms and customs of the tribe. A child learns all this from his family. This knowledge will make it easy for the child to become integrated into society once he has grown up. The child obtains his primary education at home. Taylor (as quoted by Greenblatt, 1990:225) supports this idea that culture "is the beliefs, morals, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."

The modern orientation in this play is represented by Dithole and Nombini. They want to change the Bakhudung customs, and support the view that a loving heart knows no bounds. Hall and du Gay (1996:23) say that "identities can be adopted like a change of costume." I agree with this because culture is nowadays changing rapidly. So, Dithole wants to show his determination to marry Nombini. Dithole in the exposition act 1, scene 2 indicates this by answering his mother:

Nka se dire jaaka mme a batla
 Ke batla go dira jaaka pelo e batla.
 Fa e le gore kwa ke welang teng
 Boteng jwa gona bo ka nthoba molala,
 Go siame, gonne go robega wa me
 E seng wa ga mme kgotsa rre.
 (I won't do as my mother wishes
 I want to do as my heart wants.
 If where I land,
 Its depth can break my neck,
 It's all right, because it is my neck that breaks
 Not my mother's or my father's.) p.8

This is a clear indication that Dithole is rejecting his tribe's values, norms and customs and would like to satisfy his personal needs and feelings, that is, his love for Nombini. He acts strangely towards his parents and the tribe. He wants to do what he thinks is important to him. In the complication, Dithole further indicates that:

Melao ya gaetsho ga se melao, dinyana.
 Ga ke go nyalele bagaetsho, ke a go inyalela.
 E bile ga ke go nyalele bagolo ke a go inyalela.
 Nna le wena re tšile go tshela mmogo.
 Tlhwaya tsebe o tle o nkutlwe sentlentle,
 Mphe pelo ya gago, tsotlhe di tle di direge.
 (Our rule and customs are nothing
 I don't marry you for the tribe, but for myself
 I don't even marry you for my parents, but for myself.
 You and I are going to live together
 Listen to me and understand well
 Give me your heart and all will be fine.) p. 39

Here Dithole expresses his wish to go against tradition. A chief's wife is regarded as the tribe's mother. She should therefore be chosen by the tribe and the marriage should be organised by the tribe. Therefore, Dithole is creating a big problem by choosing a wife for himself and it will lead to conflict between him and his parents and the tribe. In other words, Dithole has to deal with culture as a system of constraints and the play deals with how Dithole negotiates these constraints.

Here Dithole is being too individualistic. He is concerned with himself alone. He does not care for his parents' wishes and their customs. He would like to marry the person he loves best, i.e. Nombini, without the involvement of the tribe, his parents and tradition. But as a chief's son he cannot escape his responsibilities.

In Dintshontsho tsa lorato the author indicates traditional time when Sakoma in the exposition proposes love to Mmamotia by using his traditional music instrument to express his love by singing:

Sakoma : Kwa a leng teng, motho yo motshwana

Motho yo motshwana le marinini

E rile jale ke le ngwanyana,

Ka re tumalana ga se ya babedi,

Ke tonki, tshetlha e dinalanyana.

(Where is she an attractive woman

A person whose gums are also beautiful

When I was still young

I said that an agreement cannot be made by two people

Its a donkey, which is grey with nails.) p.5

One may say that the quotation above serves as a compliment that according to Sakoma, Mmamotia is a beautiful woman and like a donkey she is always quiet with beautiful nails.

Sakoma, still in the same act, scene 2 cannot marry Mmamotia because of these traditional barriers. Mmamotia explains this further to Sakoma:

Mmamotia : O ka bo o se mfaladi nkabo ke go reetsa.

Mhaladi ga a na le gotwe o na le lerato.

Morafe wa gaetsho ga o ka ke wa ntheetsa

Ka lorato lo ka kuisa pherere ya molato.

(If you were not a foreigner, I would have listened.

A foreigner has no love.

My tribe will never listen to me.

Love can cause a commotion.) p.12

Raditladi and Ntsime's texts indicate that foreigners according to the Batswana culture, are not regarded as important people. Because of love, Sakoma wants to marry Mmamotia knowing well that he is a foreigner. The quotation also expresses the attitude of the tribe towards foreigners. Their love would upset tradition because, according to their customs, they will not be allowed to marry. The love of Sakoma and Mmamotia creates a conflict.

In the end in Dintshontsho tsa lorato, Phoi (dove), one of the villagers, indicated that everything has its end (p.43). Our rights will be invisible. Many people will be killed and

some will flee away from their homes but at the end justice will win. Kalafi at the end got his punishment for stealing Mmamotia and Sakoma also dies paying for the death of Ponalo even if justice came indirectly.

Sakoma, in his monologue on his way to Mokwena, blames himself because people said big words at the tribal office. He says : “Today I am here, I don’t have anything to put on my shoulders. I am just like an old buffalo”. He is just like an animal that has no place to hide.

The herd boy also showed his concern and indicated that their land is cursed. Visitors died on our land and their blood is all over the stones. This is pathetic because they love their land.

Dintshontsho tsa lorato also indicates how important the names of the characters are and how they reveal their traits. Sakoma (Of the song) acts against his name. As his name suggests, he is supposed to be a soft and caring person but instead he shows that he is rude and a bully. This is clear from his speech when he is talking to the councillors about the death of Ponalo and when he goes to Mokwena to kill Kalafi. His motive is to show the tribe that a foreigner can marry a Motswana woman. Mmamotia also shows some weakness when she leaves Ponalo in Sakoma’s house. As Sakoma’s lover, she should have fought Ponalo.

Ponalo (revelation) confronts Mmamotia to show how brave she is and takes Sakoma from Mmamotia. Kalafi (a healer) acts according to his name. He protects Mmamotia from Sakoma.

In conclusion, one may notice that Raditladi and Ntsime are fond of the Batswana tradition. The traditional places they use reveal the Batswana beliefs. The Batswana like to use names of places that reveal their culture and that have meaning to them to reveal their cultural identity. Pelo e ja serati indicates that people want to change and live a better life. People are tired of the hard rules of the Batswana culture of choosing a wife for a husband. They want to choose their own wives because a loving heart knows no bounds.

4.1.5.7 CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THEME IN DINTSHONTSHO TSA LORATO AND PELO E JA SERATI

Theme is the central meaning of any literary piece of art. This is what the author wants to pass on to his readers. The characters in a drama, through their dialogue, play an important part in conveying the meaning and the theme of the drama.

The theme in Dintshontsho tsa lorato is deaths caused by love. Love plays an important part in this play. According to Kövecses (1986:94), “love is a fire which burns everything, it is a flood which carries us away, it is a depth which swallows us up, it is a fluid which fills a container and then overflows. Love’s intensity is always at a maximum height no matter which scale we use to measure it”. This love is demonstrated by the title of the play which means “Deaths caused by love”. Ponalo as the first victim is killed by Sakoma so that he can be free with Mmamotia and the other victims brought devastating, deadly effects..

According to the Batswana culture, lobola binds the two families together, but in Pelo e ja serati no mention of lobola is made. The only bond found here is of the ancestors. The underlying value here is respect for the ancestors while it shows how important they are. Dintshontsho tsa lorato also does not show the transfer of lobola and the text ends in a tragic way where all the main characters are dead.

In the end the angry society and Dithole’s parents forget their differences with Dithole and allow him to marry Nombini. The norms of their culture seem to slip from their minds when they accept a foreigner as the wife of Dithole.

In conclusion one may therefore say that theme is a direct comment on the underlying message and the emotions that govern people. Theme is very important in the sense that it is the message that the dramatist wants to convey to his readers. Theme in Pelo e ja serati and Dintshontsho tsa lorato can be seen as dividing people into tribal groups who are full of mutual hatred and mistrust. The Bakhudung or Dithole’s people want their own pure culture. They do not want to mix with other cultures. They want to remain true to their culture and this can be regarded as a kind of apartheid. Love is a destructive force that can force you to do what you cannot in the end explain.

All the elements of the play are governed by the theme. In both plays, characters have a problem with the Batswana culture and the problem of falling in love with foreigners. The setting in both plays create a favourable rural environment for the Batswana to practise their culture. The events of the plot follow one another in an orderly sequence from the motorial moment up to the denouement and help to bring out clearly the theme of these plays that the Batswana cannot mix with foreigners. But at the end, in Pelo e ja serati Dithole married a foreigner.

4.1.5.8. THE PORTRAYAL OF TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN PELO E JA SERATI AND DINTSHONTSO TSA LORATO

Only two rules from the traditional marriage custom play a major role in Pelo e ja serati and Dintshontsho tsa lorato, and in the construction of cultural identity, viz. the rule that a Motswana may not marry a foreigner (a person from another tribe) and marrying the cousin.

In Pelo e ja serati, this is clear from MmaLefufa's speech (act one, scene two) where the girl's parents meet at MmaNkileng (mother of hate me) to discuss and evaluate the issue of Dithole and Nombini's love.

MmaLefufa : Bogosi jwa rona bo tla nyelela,
 Gonne re tla bo re buswa ke Matebele le Matejana.
 Fa ke akanya selo se, pelo ya me e a hibila.
 Fa ke gopola gore banake ba tla buswa ke Nkašele.
 Matlho a me a seka dikeledi, mogopolo o a huduga.
 (Our chieftainship will be destroyed
 Because the Ndebele will be ruling us.
 When I think about this, my heart becomes red
 When I remember that my children will be ruled by a Ndebele,
 My eyes are filled with tears, and my imagination disappears.) p.23.

The quotation indicates that the Bakhudung tribe really respects their tradition and hates foreigners. They fear mixing with them. The strong reaction of Mmalefufa (mother of jealousy) as her name suggests, shows jealousy that Nombini might become the chief's wife. She wants this for her daughter. The main problem here is legitimacy and jealousy.

Serame adds : Jaanong ke tshwanelo gore rona ba re sa laolweng ke maikutlo,
 Re go batlele motho tota, mosadi wa legae.
 (Because we are not controlled by our feelings, it is right for us that,
 We must get you a real wife, a Motswana woman.) p.10.

Dithole's father believes that a real wife is the one who is chosen by parents. He does not think that Nombini can make a good wife and the worst part of it, she is not a Motswana.

According to Pelo e ja serati the older people want to stick to their tradition but the other people, Dithole and Batšhipile, want to change. They believe tradition and cultural identity are aspects of the past. Love does not choose between Motswana and a foreigner. The fact is that a loving heart knows no bounds.

In Dintshontsho tsa lorato, it is the girl who belongs to the royal family. She is in love with a foreigner Sakoma. According to the traditional marriage and the Batswana culture it is totally wrong to be in love with a foreigner.

Mmamotia knows that her tribe is not in favour of foreigners. Sakoma is also aware that it is wrong to love a Mongwato girl if you are a foreigner. This is clear from the conversation among Sakoma, Rrekgosi (father king) and Mmadiphefo (Mother winds). Sakoma in act one, scene one, says :

Sakoma : O itse bafaladi re tshaba basadi
 Mosadi yoo ke ngwana wa Bangwato.
 Fa re pagama go tshwara dinaledi
 Go sala morago senyana lerato.
 (You know we foreigners, we are afraid of women
 That woman is a child of the Bangwato.
 If we climb high to touch the stars
 Only love is left behind.) p.6.

The above quotation shows clearly that foreigners are actually not afraid of women. The problem is that they are not accepted by people especially the Batswana. They are afraid of them because they are foreigners, but the feelings of love will always remain.

Here Sakoma loves Mmamotia and he does not care that he is a foreigner. People can be as high as they want, or occupy high positions in life or act like godfathers among the people, but love can bring them down to earth.

The Batswana regard marriage as an important aspect of social life. They believe that marriage binds two families together and builds a good relationship. One of the important aspects in the marriage of the Batswana is lobola. In Pelo e ja serati, Dithole marries Nombini, and in Bogosi kupe, Oshupile marries Matlhodi. In Moji Motlhabi we hear about his wives. But the missing part in all these marriages is lobola. No author makes mention of this; we only hear that so and so has been married. Sakoma goes to Mokwena and claims that he is going to take back his wife. He does not negotiate this with Mmamotia's parents. The lobola that Schapera regards as of central importance, is assumed as self-evidence. Lobola is believed to bind the couple and their parents but Sakoma claims Mmamotia without paying lobola. This is also seen in Dithole and Nombini. They are married without lobola. The lack of lobola in these texts means that the Batswana are undermining their culture. It can be assumed that the author knows that everybody does this and feels no need to mention it. Maybe the publishers wanted to suppress this so that people can get rid of lobola. The authors focus on the love between a foreigner and a Motswana and probably feel that lobola is less important.

In the selected texts, the authors seem to overlook this issue of lobola which forms a major part of the Tswana cultural marriage. We only hear of the marriage but the proper steps are not followed. According to the Tswana custom, such a marriage would not be legitimate because the parents were not involved. They are the ones who should take the initiative and make all the arrangements.

4.1.5.9. RELATIONS WITH FOREIGNERS

The Bakhudung tradition causes division among the people. The other girls are bold enough to tell Nombini that she is a foreigner; she cannot be married to Dithole. It is also surprising that they realise this only after the proposal of Dithole to Nombini. No one mentioned that Nombini is a foreigner before. Their jealousy forces them to discriminate against foreigners.

But Dithole wants to get rid of this division by marrying Nombini and showing his people that she is just like any other woman.

Both texts indicate that no person can stop people from falling in love because of culture. They would rather end up dead, which indeed occurred in Dintshontsho tsa lorato. Pelo e ja serati ends with a positive situation where Dithole and Nombini tie the knot. His parents and the Bakhudung tribe are very happy because they believe that their ancestors made it possible for Dithole to marry Nombini. According to the Batswana culture, they cannot disobey the wish of the ancestors, otherwise the ancestors would become angry and punish them.

The relationship between the Batswana and foreigners is not acceptable. They cannot tolerate to be ruled by a Ndebele woman. The girls and their parents are also worried about Dithole's decision. They indicate that it cannot be proper for Dithole to marry Nombini. They do not want to mix their blood with the blood of the Ndebele. To solve the problem of Dithole and Nombini's marriage, Nombini and her family are chased from the village.

Today all people are regarded as equal under the law. Therefore a person can marry any woman of his choice, irrespective of her origin and without letting go of his cultural identity. Even though people can marry foreigners, they will still maintain their cultural traits.

4.1.5.10. THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS IN PELO E JA SERATI

The author in this play indicates that he is fully aware that the Batswana strongly believe in ancestors. The ancestors as superpowers in the play know when a person is in dire need of help. They are also aware that tribal intolerance can easily move human beings to go against each other and other tribes.

In the climax at the chief's place (act four, scene four) Batšhipile convinces the chief that the ancestors had revealed themselves to him in a dream and told him the whereabouts of Dithole.

Batšhipile explains : Kgosi ke lorile badimo ba nthaya ba re

Ke se tshwenyega, tsala ya me e tla goroga.

(Chief, in my dream the ancestors told me that

I must not panic, my friend will come back.) p.66.

In the same act and scene the tribe also believes that Dithole will come back and one of them says :

Mogale : Fa a ka tlhaga a tshotswe ke Nombini

Badimo ba tla bo ba rata gore ba nyalane

(If Nombini can bring him back

It will mean that the ancestors are in favour of their marriage.) p.67.

The tribe finally accepts Nombini as their future chief's wife. They believe that is the wish of their ancestors. Batšhipile's dream that the ancestors told him that he must not worry, Dithole will come back, also stresses the point that the ancestors told him that Dithole will come back and marry the woman who rescued him. They make an exception to their cultural rule and accept that the marriage will take place. Dithole and Nombini's marriage suggests that the cultural identity of the Bakhudung could be changed, because it portrays a different relation with foreigners.

The main point here is that even if the Bakhudung are against other issues that threaten their culture, they strongly respect the decision of the ancestors. They cannot reject the wishes of the ancestors. Maybe the girls had seen that Dithole was sick or he was not normal and could not marry. They gave up hope and let him marry Nombini as the ancestors wished. Ancestors form part of their culture which is in contrast with Dintshontsho tsa lorato in which Sakoma does not marry Mmamotia.

4.1.5.11. CONCLUSION : MARRIAGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

In conclusion both plays dramatise the sensitive issue of marriage between a foreigner and a Motswana. They both show the disadvantages of a Motswana falling in love with a foreigner. The Batswana look down on foreigners and do not regard them as their equals in marriage. In both plays, the main characters fight to get their lovers back. The Batswana feel that they cannot share their lives with foreigners in matrimony. They do not want to mix their blood with the blood of a foreigner. According to the Batswana cultural marriage, the parents are the ones who should take the initiative. But this does not happen in Dintshontsho tsa lorato. The transfer of cattle should be done before marriage takes place. But in both plays no lobola

is paid. Sakoma claims his lover as his wife. Dithole in the end marries Nombini without first paying lobola as his tradition suggests. Both the authors of these plays seem not to see the importance of lobola and how the Batswana cultural marriage works.

The texts under consideration do not show the procedure of a cultural marriage. In Pelo e ja serati, Dithole's parents try to convince him to marry his cousin, but the move or idea was not accepted. He wanted to marry a woman of his choice and refuses the suggestion of his parents. In the end we hear that Dithole marries Nombini, and Sakoma also claims Mmamotia to be his wife. But in both texts, the authors do not mention lobola which gives sense to the Batswana cultural marriage.

In the end, youths do not understand whether lobola should be paid or not because the text does not show this. It seems as if it is just a saying that says, there must be a transfer of lobola before marriage takes place, but this does not happen.

I would like next to turn my attention to chieftainship in Setswana using the two texts, Magagana and Maragana as examples. The two texts deal with chieftainship especially with the question of succession, which reveal important aspects of Batswana cultural identity.

4.2. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE ROLE OF CHIEFS : MARAGANA AND MAGAGANA

This section will investigate how chieftainship is portrayed and how cultural identity is constructed in the two texts Maragana and Magagana. The section will show what the conflict is about and how it is related to chieftainship. The relation to authority and the influence of characters in these two texts, conflict and theme will be discussed. The influence of the characters and cultural identity on these two texts will be described. The questions that are raised about chieftainship will be indicated in order to determine what role chieftainship plays in constructing a Batswana cultural identity.

Maragana was published in 1965 and Magagana in 1974. Magagana is a continuation of Maragana (internal squabbles), Magagana meaning battle axe. In Maragana we find Mosila and Lerothodi fighting for the chieftainship and in Magagana we meet Molaodi (the son of Lerothodi) also fighting for the chieftainship. Modise also published Gareng ga metswi in

1967. He was born in 1935. Both the texts are old and have both been written by the same author. Both texts are set in a rural place, Lophephe, before Western civilization reached the people and they still practised the traditional Batswana lifestyle.

4.2.1. SUMMARY OF MARAGANA (Internal squabbles)

Mosila (Grinder) is the uncle of Mojabeng (one who eats his owners) and Lerothodi (A drop). Mojabeng as the elder son takes over as chief after the death of Lekaba and leads the Bakwena to Bangwato land. They pay many cattle to get permission to settle on Bangwato land. They also promise to help the Bangwato in times of war.

The Bangwato land is very dry and people become sick and die of hunger. There is no grass and their cattle die. Lerothodi and Mosila are dissatisfied, and decide to kill Mojabeng. Mosila kills Mojabeng. After returning to Lophephe where the Batswana settled, Lerothodi wants to take over the chieftainship but Mosila refuses because he is the one who killed Mojabeng.

Mosila and Lerothodi fight for the chieftainship. The Bakwena tribe is divided into two factions. During the war it looks as if Lerothodi (a drop) will win the fight, but Mosila (grinder) manages to kill Lerothodi.

The author here indicates that the Bakwena do not know who should be the legitimate chief and who should become the successor after the chief's death.

4.2.2. SUMMARY OF MAGAGANA

Magagana opens by introducing Molaodi, the headman of the Bakwena at Lophephe. Chief Letsholo is now old and wants to retire but the problem is, who should succeed him, since he does not have a son. Mohurutshe (his grandfather) tells Molaodi that he is the one who should take over, but that he will only get the chieftainship by fighting Moilantwa. Mohurutshe gives him Magagana to fight for his rights. According to the Batswana tradition, the rightful chief always wins. The Batswana believe that the rightful chief is always protected by the ancestors; therefore Molaodi will ultimately win the fight for chieftainship.

The play centres around Molaodi and Moilantwa who both would like to succeed chief Letsholo. Molaodi is the biological son of Lerothodi and Moilantwa is the son from a concubine. They both want to be the chief, but Moilantwa knows that he is not supposed to succeed Letsholo. He uses a traditional doctor to help him to become chief.

According to Mohurutshe, Molaodi must use Magagana to kill all people who stand in his way. The fight for chieftainship commences between Molaodi and Moilantwa and their regiments.

Before they can end this, a battle erupts between the Bakwena and the Ndebele. Moilantwa is killed and later Molaodi. Even though there is hatred between Molaodi and Moilantwa and their men, the death of Moilantwa was a blow to Molaodi and his men. They show sympathy that they have lost him. According to the Batswana culture Moilantwa is supposed to lose the fight because he fights for something that is not rightfully his. Molaodi was not supposed to die because he is the rightful chief but the author lets him die because he is unable to resolve the problem of chieftainship. We may also say he is unable to resolve the problem.

4.2.3. CONFLICT IN THE TWO TEXTS AND HOW IT IS RELATED TO CULTURAL IDENTITY

According to Jafta (1978:35) “conflict is the central force of any drama because it starts the ball rolling, whether it is within the individual, or an individual against an external force”.

Both Maragana and Magagana dramatise the same problem, viz. that people are fighting for the chieftainship which is not rightfully theirs. The conflict in the two texts Maragana and Magagana is between legitimacy and power; between personal power and ambition, on the one hand, and the good of the tribe on the other.

The conflict in Magagana puts Molaodi against his brother Moilantwa after his grandfather Mohurutshe had told him that the chieftainship belongs to him. He must not feel ashamed of his position.

Both Maragana and Magagana show personal conflict as well as cultural conflict. Maiden and Scott (1980:6) maintain that :“the term conflict means that a story or play brings together

two opposing forces, which we call a protagonist and an antagonist and then develops and ends the struggle between these two forces". The struggle to become chief in these two plays develops in a crisis where the opposing parties go into a fight to kill each other. In Maragana the killing of Mojabeng complicates the situation and leads to the crisis. Mosila is Lerothodi's uncle and he wants the chieftainship. Lerothodi is the legitimate person also in need of power. This crisis causes them to fight and Mosila survives.

In Magagana the same problem is found between Molaodi and Moilantwa. Moilantwa is not the chief's son but he wants the chieftaincy. Most of the main characters are killed. For the Batswana culture, it is not right, since the real chief has no need to fight for chieftainship; he is born to it and should take it without fighting.

It is clear that Modise has named his characters with a purpose. In Setswana, there is a saying that says "Ina lebe, seromo" meaning a bad name is a blot. Mosila (One who grinds) believes that the chieftainship belongs to him because it is he who killed Mojabeng. One may say that this idea of Mosila's is not proper because he knows that according to their culture, the chieftainship does not belong to him. Even the people in the tribe know that he is not the rightful person. The conflict in Maragana is between legitimate authority versus taking authority by force. Mosila, in the exposition, (act 1, scene 1) explains this :

Mosila : Kana ke Malomaagwe Lerothodi

O ne a nkopa gore re fedise Mojabeng

E rile ke sena go bolaya Mojabeng ka letsogo ja me,

Ka mmolelela gore ga e ka ke ya re ke

bolaile Mojabeng ka tlhoka go busa.

(I am Lerothodi's uncle

He asked me to kill Mojabeng

After killing Mojabeng with my own hand,

I told him that

I have killed Mojabeng and I must rule.) p.6

Mosila in this quotation wants to exercise his power by taking chieftainship. He feels he has killed Mojabeng and the reward he should get, is to become chief. He knows that according to the Batswana custom, he is not the rightful person because he is Lerothodi's uncle.

In Maragana in the exposition (act one, scene one), people stress the point that Mosila is or should be the chief. He, not Lerothodi, is the only chief of the Bakwena. This is clear from Rapodi's speech :

Rapodi : Kana rona batho ba gago re itse fela jaaka o itse
 Le fa Lerothodi a na le mokgwa jaana,
 Rona ga re itse epe kgosi fa e se wena, Mokwena.
 (We the people of Mokwena, we know just like you know
 Even if Lerothodi shows something,
 The only chief we know is you.) p.6.

This indicates that the people who praise him are afraid of Mosila. They want him to become chief because he saved them from a bad chief, even though they think that he himself is bad. He killed Mojabeng and now he wants what he knows does not belong to him.

In the same scene Molosiwa, on the other hand, also praises Mosila for being a brave chief.

Molosiwa : Ka re, motho yo kgosi o kana kang?
 Motho yo Mosila o kana kang
 Kana o godile go feta borobalo jwa tladi.
 (I say, this person is a chief, how big is he
 This person Mosila how big is he
 He has grown up more than a bolt of lightning itself.) p.13.

Mosila here is regarded as being as dangerous as lightning. People respect him for his bravery. In act two, scene two in the complication other people also believe that Lerothodi is a chief but he seems to forget that.

Mmanoko : Lerothodi, nna ke itse e le wena kgosi ya Lophephe.
 (Lerothodi, I know that you are the one who is the chief of Lophephe.) p.21.

In his monologue, Lerothodi indicates that he is not happy about the decision taken by Mosila to kill Mojabeng in order to become chief. He indicates that it is difficult to satisfy a person. Mosila is not afraid of Lerothodi and he takes the chieftainship after killing Mojabeng. He is happy because he knows that he is brave.

Another important point is that Lerothodi admits in the complication (act 2, scene 2) that he ordered Mosila to kill Mojabeng because he was unable to lead the tribe. In the same scene the outcome turns sour for Lerothodi.

Lerothodi adds : Mosila o gapile bogosi jwa me

O batla madi a me, go a tlhotlha

Ka o a nyoretswe o utlwile monko wa one mo go Mojabeng.

Ke ne ke mo lopile gore a nnamole Mojabeng

Nteko ene a ba a ikaeletse go nkamoga bogosi.

(Mosila has taken my chieftainship.

Now he wants to kill me

He is thirsty for my blood now that he smelled it from Mojabeng's blood

I asked him to help me kill Mojabeng

Unfortunately he aimed at taking my chieftaincy.) p.22.

In act three, scene two, in the highest complication stage, Lerothodi's people persuade him that the chieftainship of Lophephe belongs to him. He must stand up and fight for his rights. They will protect and support him in whatever he wishes to do. They believe that Lerothodi is the rightful person. He is the one who should rule, not his uncle, Mosila.

Thomoyadira says : Ke le esi, ka re ema ka dinao o dire kgosi ya me.

Bolela gore ke dire eng, o tla mpona!

Mosila ga se kgosi ya sepe, ga ke mmone ka sepe.

Lerothodi, dira se o se ratang, ke tla go ema nokeng

(I for one, I say stand up and make things happen

Just tell me what to do, you will see me!

Mosila is not a chief, I am not afraid of him

Lerothodi, do whatever you like, I will support you.) p.36.

Lerothodi's people just like Mosila's people fully support him and wish that he will become the chief of Lophephe. People are afraid of authority and they also respect their chiefs. Respect according to the Batswana culture plays an important part. The fight between Lerothodi and Mosila divides the tribe into two groups. The conflict between Mosila's people and Lerothodi's people become very difficult. Lerothodi's people advise him to stand up for

his rights and instruct them to do what he wishes them to do, they will support him. They say slanderously that Mosila is one of the witches who goes around at night naked. They can't regard him as their chief.

Mosila's people, on the other hand, say that they only know one chief, and that is Mosila. They say that Lerothodi does not know that two bulls cannot be together in the same kraal, one must go.

The arguments between Mosila and Lerothodi raise a very strong division among the tribe. Their arguments also indicate how they respect their authority without turning their backs on Mosila and Lerothodi even if they know the truth about succession. In the Batswana culture, respect for authority plays a major role. They regard chiefs as their heroes, their saviours, people who can lead them during bad and good times. But one may say that the support of different chiefs makes this fail. The people will never regard them as their saviours who can support them during bad times. They will have doubts about their capability and their loyalty.

The characters, Mosila and Lerothodi in both texts see themselves as people who have the right to become chief. They do not have the well-being of the tribe at heart. Their personal ambition is the most important thing viz. to become chief.

Rapodi (father goat) act one, scene one in the exposition says to Mosila that :

Rapodi : Bogosi o bo bolokile, kgosi ya me

Ke jwa gago ka re go amogetse.

(You have kept the chieftainship safe, my chief,

It's yours because we have accepted you.) p.6.

From the above quotation it is clear that the tribe influenced Mosila to take the chieftaincy by force knowing well that Lerothodi is the chief according to their tradition. In their fight, Mosila manages to kill Lerothodi.

Mosila's people (act two, scene one), in the complication, show that they do not want Lerothodi to become chief.

Modise : Re sa ntse re tla bona, Bakwena. Tota Lerothodi e ne e le mang?

(We will see, Bakwena. Who is Lerothodi exactly?) p.21

The quotation above shows that Modise does not respect Lerothodi and he does not regard him as his chief.

Lerothodi's people, act 2, scene 2, in the complication on the other hand, help him to fight to get his chieftainship.

Mmanoko : Lerothodi, Lerothodi, Bogosi jwa Lephephe,

O tla bo aparela nkwe letsatsi le tomane magodimo

Re tla bo re le teng, motshegare oo tadi e amusa

Go tla be go kopane digau tsa motse le nama ya motho

Ntšanyana tsa ga Mosila di tla tlhokololwa ka thebe.

(Lerothodi, Lerothodi, the chieftainship of Lophephe,

You will wear a leopard skin for it at midday.

We will be there, at midday

Brave people of the village will meet with the meat of a person

Mosila's dogs will be killed by an assegai.) p.21

The above quotation indicates a deep division in the tribe. The image of the dog shows the tendency on both sides to dehumanise the enemy. They want Lerothodi to start the fight so that they can help him kill Mosila's people.

Mosila also indicates that he is in the mood for a fight. He wants to take the chieftainship by force. This is clear from the crisis in act 3, scene 1, when he says :

Mosila : Fela itse fa bokete jwa Bakwena e le ba me;

Yo o nang le puo a tle go itebaganya le nna Mosila.

(Just know that the majority of the Bakwena is mine;

Anyone who has a say, must come forth and face Mosila.) p.15

The quotation shows that Mosila is ready to fight. He wants to show his people that he is not afraid of Lerothodi. He knows that most of the Bakwena tribe support him out of fear hence Lerothodi is not a threat to him. They indicate that Mosila is brave in battle.

Still in the crisis, Lerothodi is influenced by Thomoyadira to fight for the chieftainship.

Thomoyadira : Ke le esi, ka re ema ka dinao o dire, kgosi ya me.

Mosila ga se kgosi ya sepe, nna ga ke mmone ka sepe.

(I myself alone, I say stand up with your feet and work, my chief.

Mosila is a weak chief, I am not afraid of him.) p.36

Mosila in his monologue (act 5, scene 1) in the climax, swears that he will kill Lerothodi. He says :

Mosila : Go ba bona, ke tla ba kgemetla, ke ba tlhokisa nno

Maipelo a tla khutla fa ke ba tshela ntwana ka modumo.

Lerothodi, go mmona, ke tla mo pipitlela ka lerumo.

(If I see them, I will kill them, I will not give them place to rest.

Happiness will end when I fight them with a lot of noise

Lerothodi, when I see him, I will kill him with a sword.) p.42

This shows that Mosila is determined to take the chieftainship. But this is not an easy way, because he must first kill Lerothodi. In the denouement, (p.63) Mosila manages to kill Lerothodi.

In Magagana, Moilantwa (one who hates to fight) wants to become chief but he knows that according to the Batswana culture, he cannot become chief. Schapera (1977:55) explains this rule, writing: "The chief's son by a concubine does not have the right to succeed, even if there are no legitimate descendants".

Magagana also shows the conflict between legitimate authority and taking authority by force. This is clear from the exposition (act 1, scene 1), where Mohurutshe influences Molaodi to fight for the chieftainship of Lophephe because he feels Molaodi is the rightful person to become chief after the death of chief Letsholo because all the Bakwena knows that. He says :

Mohurutshe : Bakwena ba teng ba ba go tsetseng

Bôpa mo Lophephe, kodu ya gago e thaakanye ditsebe.

(The Bakwena people are there for you

Roar in Lophephe, your base must crumble in their ears.) p.8

Mohurutshe here stresses the fact that Molaodi should make people feel that he is the rightful chief. He must become chief because he feels it belongs to him.

Raphoto (one of the villagers) in the exposition (act 1, scene 2), stresses the point that the Bakwena will not accept that Molaodi as the chief of Lophephe. He says :

Raphoto : Le fa go ntse jalo, ke lemoga gore

Ga se Bakwena botlhe ba tla amogelang morwa Lerothodi
mo bogosing jwa Lophephe.

(Even if it is like that, I see that

Not all the Bakwena will receive Lerothodi's son
into the chieftainship of Lophephe.) p.10

This indicates that even if Molaodi can become chief, it is clear that Raphoto and others will not condone that. They want Moilantwa even though they know he is not the chief's son. According to the Batswana tradition if your mother has been paid lobola, automatically the child belongs also to the father which is the case with Moilantwa. He knows that he has the right to demand that position of chief.

Moilantwa asks for help from a traditional healer so that he can become chief and Diraditsile (Moilantwa's messenger) reports to the traditional doctor that :

Diraditsile : A re o batla o mo thusa ka dipheko

Ka a kaeletswe fela ka kwa kgosing.

(He says he wants you to help him with medicinal charms
because he is still stuck at the royal family.) p.13.

Mohurutshe (Molaodi's grandfather) answers Molaodi's question about becoming a chief :

Molaodi : A ke ka ronwa ke nkwe go e apara?

(Is it proper that I can put on the leopard's skin?) p.7.

Mohurutshe answers by saying :

Morwaaka, poo ga e ronwe ke lonaka lwa yona.

(My son, a bull doesn't feel ashamed of its own horn.) p.8.

The bull in the above quotation is Molaodi. His grandfather Mohurutshe advises him to take the chieftainship without shame and fear, because it is his natural right.

In act 1, scene 5, in the complication, the ghost is introduced and Molaodi visits Mohurutshe (Molaodi's grandfather) to find out who is going to become chief when Letsholo retires. Mohurutshe tells Molaodi that he has about heard Letsholo wish to retire. Molaodi asks Mohurutshe and says :

Molaodi : Rremogolo, a ke tlhaloganye se :

A ke ka ronwa ke nkwe go e apara.

Ka e bile rangwanearre a sena morwa?

(Grandfather, let me understand this :

Should I feel ashamed to put on the leopard skin

Because my father's younger brother has no son?) p.8

The above quotation indicates clearly that Molaodi wants to become the successor of chief Letsholo. Molaodi does not have doubts about the legitimacy of his claim to be chief. According to the Batswana culture, he is the rightful person to become chief.

In the crisis Mohurutshe also confirms to Molaodi that he is the legitimate person. He has all the right to be a chief and he tells him that :

Mohurutshe : Morwaaka, poo ga e ronwe ke lonaka la yona,

lefa e le lerojana ga le ronwe ke letsele la mmaalo.

Poo e fata letshotelo la lesaka e le gareng ga dikgomo

Mme e re e le dipoeng e alole dipowana.

Motlhapeng wa yona.

Fa magatwe a re ka a utlwang e ka nna ona,

Bakwena ba teng ba ba go tsetseng,

Bopa mo Lophephe, kodu ya gago e thaakanye ditsebe.

(My son, a bull does not feel ashamed of his horn,

Even a lamb doesn't feel ashamed of its mother's teat.

A bull moves cow dung of the kraal when it is among the cows.

When it is outside it defeats all small bulls

Among his cows

If what I hear it can be the truth
 There are the Bakwena whom you are born of
 Rule in Lophephe, your voice must be filled in their ears.) p.8

In the above quotation, Mohurutshe encourages Molaodi to stand on his feet and fight for chieftainship that belongs to him. He promises him that the Bakwena tribe will support him since he is their child. His voice must be heard in Lophephe.

The ghost tries to warn chief Letsholo about his successor on his dying bed at his home. He says :

Sepoko (the ghost) : Morwaake ga a je di welang mono Lophephe
 Gompieno ke tla mo neela selepe sa magagane
 Ke mmaya kwa pele go namola Bakwena mo matebeleng
 Mokwena, a morwaake a se robale a sisa pelo.
 (My son (Molaodi) is not welcome here in Lophephe
 Today I will give him a battle axe
 I will put him in front to help the Bakwena against the Ndebele.
 Mokwena, let my son not cry while sleeping.) p.15.

The above quotation is a warning to the chief about the future of the tribe. The fight between the Batswana and the Ndebele is not proper. The author did not know how to resolve the situation between Molaodi and Moilantwa. The only way to get rid of them is to bring the Ndebele on the scene in order to kill them. Sleeping means that if Molaodi sleeps or keeps quiet he will never get the chieftaincy. He will have to use his battle axe to get this. To avoid Molaodi's tears, chief Letsholo must make a decision and give Molaodi what belongs to him.

The situation becomes tense when Molaodi's herd boy tells Diraditsile that Moilantwa cannot be his chief. Act 2, scene 4, the beating of the herd boy brought tension between Molaodi and Moilantwa and their regiments had to fight. Diraditsile wants the herd boy to say that Moilantwa is the chief, but he refuses. Molaodi is the only chief, because he is the son of Lerothodi. Diraditsile misuses his power by beating the herd boy. He says :

Diraditsile : Molaodi e ne e le mogale ko kae?
 A ga o ise o utlwalele fa kgosi e le Moilantwa?

(Molaodi was never a brave person
Haven't you heard that the chief is Moilantwa.) p.23.

Diraditsile wants Moilantwa to become chief. He does not want the herd boy to say that Molaodi is brave. He wants him to praise Moilantwa. He thinks Moilantwa can make a good chief.

According to the Batswana culture, the legitimate chief does not have to prove that he is worthy to become chief. They must exercise the Batswana rule of chieftaincy and let the rightful person rule. Here the important rule of the Batswana culture is at stake. It becomes a question of the survival of the fittest and not the hereditary succession. Mohurutshe gives Molaodi the axe.

Mohurutshe : Tsaya selepe sa magagane ke se

Selepe se, e ne e le sa ga rra rraago

Se kgotshe ditlhogo tsa dikgosi le balala

Ga se a Abelwa Lerothodi ka a ne a sena pelo.

Selepe se, o tla tsaya bogosi ka sona.

O be o bolotsa dintwa ka sona.

(Take this battle axe

This axe, belonged to your grandfather

It has split the heads of many chiefs and slaves

It was not a gift for Lerothodi because he had a weak heart.

With this axe, you will take the chieftainship.

And fight many wars with it.) p.24.

The quotation above indicates that the battle axe is a symbol of chieftainship and that with this axe, he can conquer the tribes.

The paragraph indicates how a tradition of ruling works. Chieftainship is passed from grandfather, to father and to son. Among all the Batswana tribes, there is a ruling class or family. Mohurutshe wants Molaodi to take the chieftainship because he is the legitimate heir. He thinks the chieftainship of Lophephe belongs to him.

Moilantwa's uncle, Sau, on the other hand, supports Moilantwa as his mother is married to the chief and wants him to become chief. This is clear from his speech when he says :

Sau : Moilantwa o kaya jana bopelokgale jwa kgosi

Ga ke bolo go re a neelwe bogosi jwa Lophephe

Ke ne ke tla mo katisa ke ise ke swe.

(Moilantwa shows the bravery of a chief

I have long said he must be given the chieftaincy of Lophephe

I would have trained him before I die.) p.28.

The drama ends in a situation without a solution since both Molaodi and Moilantwa die. It is because they are both against their customs or maybe the author does not have a solution to the problem which would be a weakness in the drama. Both Molaodi and Moilantwa are strong men and a victory by one would mean that the tribe becomes divided. So, it is better for the writer to get rid of both because he cannot solve the problem. He writes this to show the danger of fighting chieftainship which does not belong to you. Their death leaves the tribe without a chief and a dark future. One may also say that the actions or events in Magagana remind one of the troubles of Difaqane where people are fighting and killing one another.

Diraditsile supports Moilantwa so that he can become chief. This is clear in the crisis when he beats Molaodi's herd boy for saying Molaodi is the chief. Molaodi instructs his people to throw Diraditsile into the cave (act 3, scene 2) because he is not allowed to kill a person.

In Magagana the climax of the conflict is reached in act 5, scene 4, where Molaodi's girlfriend (Manketso), asks him to kill Moilantwa who happens to be her boyfriend too. She wants to test Molaodi's love. She asks Molaodi to kill Moilantwa with his own hand and bring her his head to make sure that Moilantwa is dead so that he can be Molaodi's wife.

Manketso : Ka seatla sa gago o reme Moilantwa ka magagana a gago;

E tla re ke tla dumela gore o mmolaile

O tle o ntsholetse tlhogo ya gagwe ka motsitsana

Ke e tsee ka diatla tsa me ke e latlhele mo tlhobolokong.

(with your hand, chop Moilantwa with your battle axe;

For me to believe that you have killed him,

Bring me his head with your hands

And I will take it with my own hands and throw it into the hole.) p.54

The above quotation shows that Manketso does not know where she stands. She does not exactly want Molaodi to win, but wants anyone who wins. She acts like a sword with two sharp ends. This shows her weak point as a woman.

It is just unfortunate for Moilantwa and Molaodi in the denouement, (act 5, scene 5) that they both die in the war with the Ndebele. The conflict between Molaodi and Moilantwa does not have a positive outcome. Before they start fighting, the Ndebele attack them. The tribe is left without a leader. The fight is very damaging and no chief is left to rule the tribe. Their fight becomes meaningless because their personal ambitions are not reached. Their fight is senseless. The future of the tribe is dark without a chief.

The remarks from Maragana and Magagana, show clearly that chieftainship here does not belong to Moilantwa or to Mosila. They both want to satisfy their own ambition and gain a position that does not belong to them. Their motives are to show people that a brave person can also become chief, even against the tradition. The tribe needs a good legitimate chief who can lead them successfully. Both texts indicate that the Batswana custom that says chieftaincy passes from father to son, is a cause for conflict. In Magagana no chief is left and in Maragana Mosila survives.

Both texts also show violence. The Bakwena fight each other and only the strongest wins the battle. The characters in both texts have a motive for fighting for chieftainship. They feel it is right to break the rule of succession so that they can satisfy their ambition of ruling or leading the Bakwena tribe. Both contenders go against the tradition that a chief cannot be elected, but must be born. One may also say that the bravest chief is the one who should rule. They no longer consider the fact that a tribe needs a good chief to support them and for their well-being.

The poem at the end in Magagana shows how the characters behaved throughout the course of the play, their actions and their wishes. The poem consists of five stanzas.

The first stanza gives a negative prognosis for the fight between Molaodi and Moilantwa. Their fight will put many people to death. It predicts that brave men like Molaodi and Moilantwa will die.

The speaker in the second stanza indicates that Molaodi and Moilantwa fought like heroes, and fought with bravery. They managed to kill their enemies. In the last two lines of stanza two death is mentioned: "death is in our hands, death is seen by naked eyes". This shows that death is always there. No one can survive this. Hence the death of Molaodi and Moilantwa. The tribe without the chief is like a dead nation or tribe.

The third stanza shows clearly that people act differently towards life. Some feel bad when a person is sick and about to die, and some rejoice because they know they will achieve something. One may say when Letsholo was dying, Moilantwa came to him to warn him about chieftainship and that he must make up his mind and tell who should rule after his death. Mohurutshe takes advantage of the chief because he noticed that he was about to die.

In the fourth stanza Manketso's (the girlfriend of both Molaodi and Moilantwa) wish is presented. She wishes to fight next to Molaodi so that she can support him when the fight becomes stronger on his side.

The poem ends with all the main characters dying, like in the text. The Bakwena are left without a chief. Both Molaodi and Moilantwa are killed in the war against the Matebele.

In Maragana Lerothodi eventually gets killed, and his uncle Mosila, who is not the legitimate chief survives. In Magagana both Molaodi and Moilantwa are killed in the battle against the Ndebele. No chief is left to take over. This indicates that going against your culture can lead to disaster.

In both plays, Lerothodi and Molaodi represent legitimate power. They are the rightful people to rule. Mosila and Moilantwa represent personal ambition. They fight for the position which does not belong to them. Mosila is Lerothodi's uncle and according to the Batswana culture he cannot rule. Moilantwa, on the other hand, is not the chief's son. Both the texts clearly

reveal that the fight is basically between legitimate authority and taking it by force. All the main characters die because they act against their culture.

People in Maragana indicate that the only chief they know is Mosila. They believe that chieftainship belongs to him because he has saved the chieftainship. They say they are happy with his chieftaincy. On the other hand Molaodi (Lerothodi's son) stresses the point that the chieftaincy of Lophephe belongs to Mosila, Lerothodi's uncle, but the truth is, according to him, it belongs to his father, Lerothodi. On the same note, Mmanoko also supports Molaodi's idea that Lerothodi should put on the leopard skin, as he is their chief. Lerothodi further explains that Mosila has taken the chieftainship because he is brave, full of hatred, and lacks the good qualities of a chief. He also wants to kill him. Mosila also feels that those who are against him, must come and face him because most of the Bakwena are on his side. Both groups feel that their leaders must become the chief. They do not consider the point of legitimacy or the succession rule of the Batswana tradition.

The herd boy, on the other hand, in Magagana, makes it clear that he cannot be ruled by Moilantwa because he is not the chief. That is why he is beaten to death by Moilantwa's friend. Both the texts indicate that the only thing that can resolve the problem of chieftaincy is the traditional rule but this does not happen. Everyone wants to use his power to take chieftainship. They do not take their culture as an important aspect. The only way of overcoming or negotiating the rule of legitimate succession is by violence or by force.

4.2.4. CHARACTERS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Characters are the author's vehicle to drive his or her drama. Through the characters the author is able to bring his/her message to the reader.

In Maragana, the characters act according to the Batswana culture. The Batswana respect authority. This is indicated by Mosila's and Lerothodi's followers in act 1, scene 1, where Rapodi tell Mosila that the chieftainship belongs to him because he saved it from a bad chief, Mojabeng. On the other hand Mmanoko also tells Lerothodi (act 1, scene 2), that the only thing she knows is that Lerothodi is the chief of Lophephe.

All the characters in Maragana display loyalty to authority. This is indicated in the fight between Mosila and Lerothodi. Their followers stand side by side with them to protect them even in a dangerous situation. They want to show their loyalty to their chief.

The same respect and loyalty is shown in Magagana. People respect and take instructions from their leaders as the Batswana culture suggests.

In the first act, Mohurutshe shows his loyalty to Molaodi by telling him that chieftaincy belongs to him. He does not want to hide the truth. Characters sometimes may force things to happen even though they know the truth. Sau, Moilantwa's uncle, wants Moilantwa to become chief even though he knows he is not the legitimate son. Another person is Diraditsile (Moilantwa's friend), who even goes to the extent of beating the herd boy to show how loyal he is to his chief.

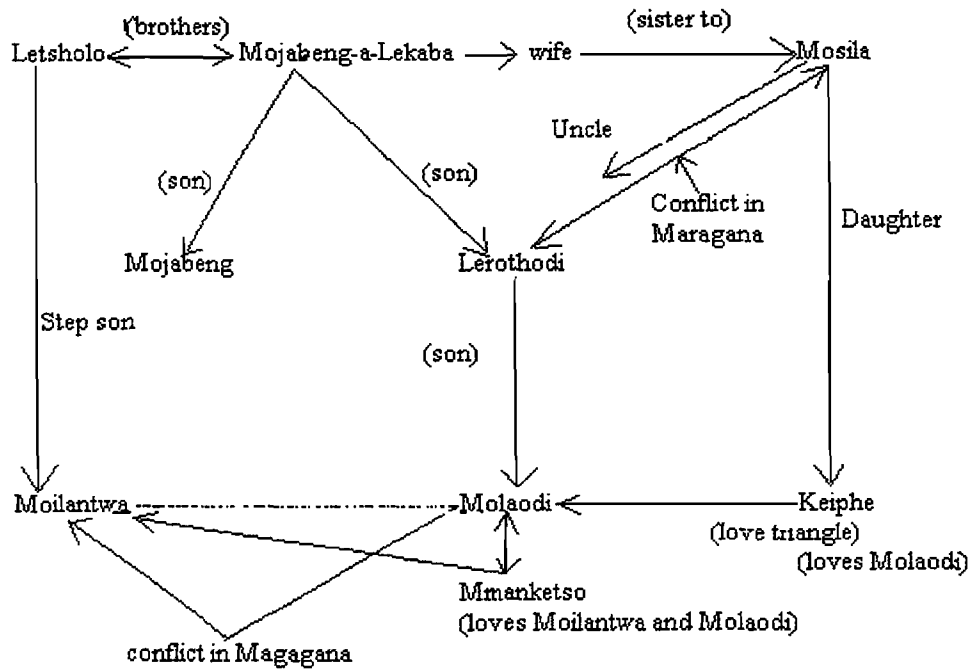
Characters in both texts are capable of revealing the Batswana cultural values of respect, loyalty and good behaviour or the lack of such values.

4.2.4.1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS (MARAGANA)

Table 1 : DRAMATIS PERSONAE IN MARAGANA AND MAGAGANA

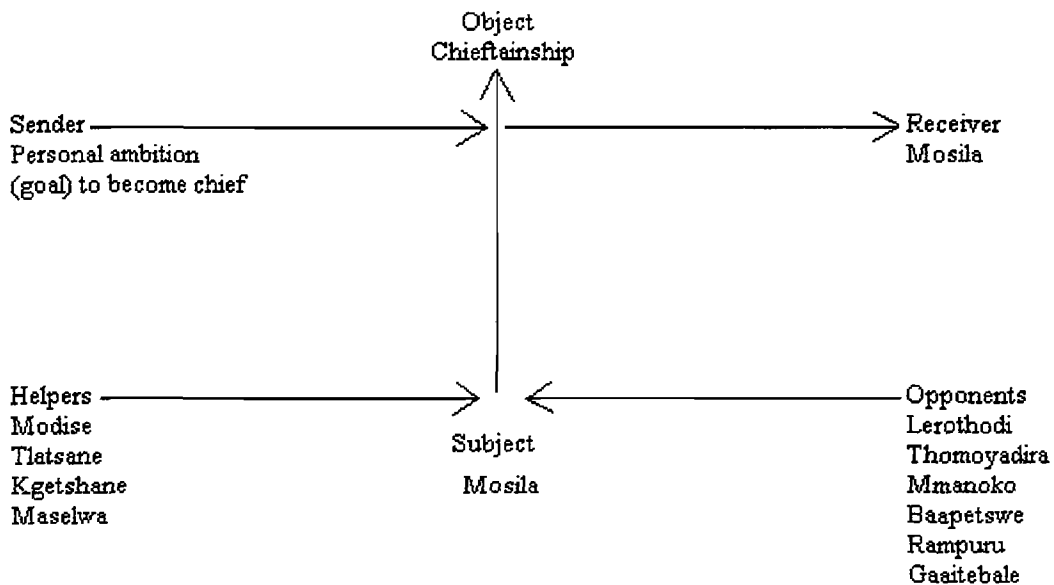
NAME OF CHARACTERS	TRANSLATION	RELATIONSHIP
Mojabeng-a-Lekaba	One who eats his owners	The father of Mojabeng and Lerothodi
Mojabeng	One who eats his owners	Brother to Lerothodi He succeeded his father Mojabeng-a-Lekaba
Lerothodi	A drop (of water)	Younger brother of Mojabeng who asked Mosila to kill his brother Mojabeng
Mosila	One who grinds	An uncle on the side of Lerothodi and Mojabeng's mother. He wants to become chief because he killed Mojabeng
Letsholo	A person who gives	Chief of the Bakwena ba Lophephe. The younger brother of Lerothodi and Mojabeng's father
Keiphe	I am giving myself	The daughter of Mosila. She is in love with Molaoedi and Moilantwa
Molaoedi	One who rules	The son of Lerothodi. He is in love with Keiphe, the daughter of Mosila. He believes he has the right to rule after Letsholo because, he is his grandfather, younger brother of his father's father.
Moilantwa	One who hates to fight.	Letsholo's son by his mother. He also feels that he has the right to rule because lobola has been paid for his mother. According to the Batswana custom if the lobola has been paid, the son can become chief.
Mmanketso	One who is making herself.	Daughter of Rakhumo, the old man of the village. She loves both Molaoedi and Moilantwa.

Diagram 1. FAMILY TREE IN MARAGANA AND MAGAGANA



ACTANTIAL ANALYSIS OF MARAGANA

Diagram 2. Diagram illustrating chieftainship in Maragana

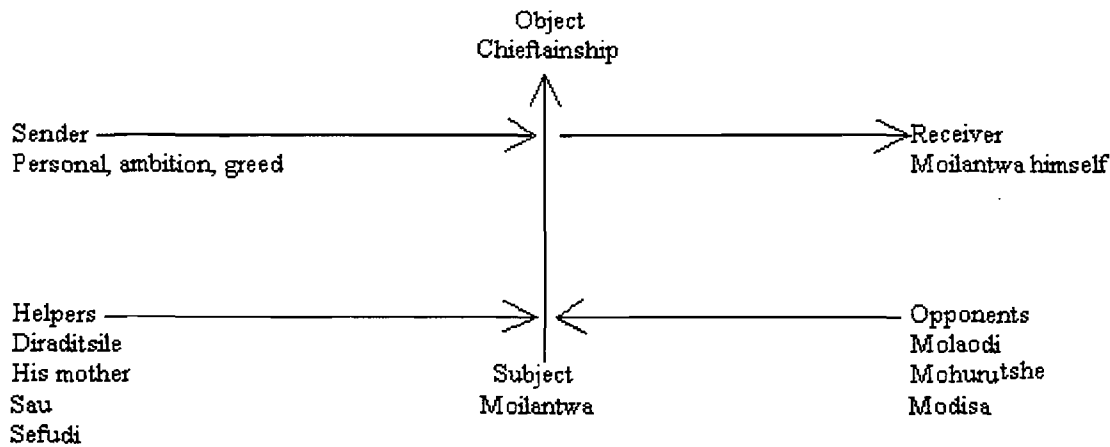


The subject here is Mosila who wants to become chief. His motive is that he killed Mojabeng with his own hands. He cannot allow Lerothodi to rule. He tricked Lerothodi and killed his brother alone. His helpers advised him to be brave during the wars. He saved the tribe from a bad chief, so he must rule. Lerothodi also wants to become chief because he thinks, that if he

has done away with Mojabeng he can become chief. This causes chaos. We find that Mosila is also on the same mission. According to the Batswana culture, Lerothodi was the rightful person to become chief, but he didn't have the qualities of a good chief like Mosila. At the end Lerothodi is killed and Mosila is left.

ACTANTIAL ANALYSIS OF MAGAGANA

Diagram 3. Diagram illustrating chieftaincy



Moilantwa is the subject who wants to become chief. As his mother was married to chief Letsholo, he thinks he is the right person to rule because lobola has been paid for his mother, and as the Batswana culture suggests he is right. On the other hand, Molaodi also feels that he must be a chief because Letsholo has no biological son who can succeed him. Letsholo is the younger brother of his father's father. Moilantwa and his helpers are blocking him. The love of Mmanketso cannot be regarded as true love. But this also contributes to the fight between Molaodi and Moilantwa. In the end both of them are dead and the tribe is left alone without a chief. Maybe the author wants to show that the rules of culture can be broken. Anyone can take chieftainship as long as he is brave enough to fight for it.

Not each and every person can be a chief. He must be the rightful person according to the Batswana culture. But Mosila, Lerothodi's uncle, indicated that only the strongest survives and wins.

Mosila is easily influenced by Lerothodi to kill Mojabeng to become chief. He believes that if the tribe's leader is not capable of defending them in times of war, or feed them, he must be dethroned or killed. Mosila manages to kill Lerothodi so that he can take over the

chieftainship. It is indicated that a ruler must not be weak. It is the belief of each and every tribe that a chief should be brave so that he can defend his tribe in times of war.

Mosila can be regarded as a killer. Mosila kills Mojabeng in the exposition and in act 5, scene 4 in the denouement he kills Lerothodi in battle.

He is a greedy person. He wants to become chief but he knows that he is not the rightful or legitimate person. He also knows that according to the Batswana culture, the uncle cannot become chief.

Mosila is inclined to look down upon people- In act 2, scene 4 in the crisis, Mosila laughs at Lerothodi who tries to relate his dream to him. He says:

Lerothodi : In the dream I saw an angry ram. It was running up and down bellowing. Later a big jackal appeared and was prepared to fight the ram. On the other side came a sheep without a shepherd. The jackal was so happy that food has arrived. That annoyed the ram and he was prepared to fight the jackal. A he-goat appeared and with its help the jackal killed the ram. A storm came from the North and caused the he-goat to run up and down. I woke up while there still was that confusion around me.

Mosila tells Lerothodi that his dream is that of a small boy. He must go and tell that to his sons. According to the poem, Mosila is the angry ram who wants chieftainship and Lerothodi is the jackal. The he-goat is the Ndebele who came to fight the Bakwena and with their help, Mosila managed to kill Lerothodi.

He easily accepts that he is spiritually weak. In the high tension of the crisis, Mosila does not care that he can be defeated because he has the full support of his men.

In the end one may say that Mosila gives the total impression that chieftaincy is not about hereditary factors or legitimacy but that it is power that controls everything. The text also indicates that Mosila has the ability to pressurise people. He wants them to fight for him and fight very close to him so that he can be brave like in the past. It also reveals that Mosila wants the chieftaincy to satisfy his personal ambition and also as a reward because he saved the tribe from a bad chief.

Chieftaincy is sacred and is controlled by the ancestors. It cannot be taken by everyone who feels he wants it. But here Mosila takes it. This implies that the ancestors have become weak and cannot protect Lerothodi, and the rule of succession is no longer important.

4.2.4.2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS (MAGAGANA)

Molaodi is the biological son of Lerothodi and according to the Batswana culture, he is the right person to take over from chief Letsholo. As a brave and bold young man, he visits Mohurutshe (Molaodi's grandfather) to find out who should become chief. Mohurutshe assures him that he is the rightful chief, but because of the presence of Moilantwa, he will have to fight for it.

Molaodi can be determined. In his monologue act 4, scene 1, on his way home :

Molaodi : Fa lo se ka lwa busetsa pelo ya me mannong,
 Ke tla futsa Bakwena ke sa ba itshwarele.
 Ke tla ikanya Maragana go sutisa bakgoreletsi ba me.
 (If you do not return my heart to its place,
 I will curse the Bakwena without forgiving them
 I will trust the battle-axe to remove my enemies) p.37

He indicates that he will fight for the chieftainship. One may notice that he really means what he is saying. He says if the Bakwena do not give him what he wants, he will curse them and he will never forgive them or their grand-grand children. He will use Magagana (a sharp axe) to kill whoever stands in his way. This is an indication that he is willing to fight for his rights.

Molaodi can be deceived easily. This is indicated when Manketso asks him to tell her his secret of Magaane. She promises him that she will be his wife if he can kill Moilantwa and become chief. Unfortunately, Molaodi is murdered before he becomes chief.

Moilantwa, Molaodi's enemy, is killed in the war between the Bakwena and the Ndebele. It seems as if Molaodi is finally going to take over, but, unfortunately he is also killed in the battle. The plot ends in a tragic way. All the main characters are dead.

Moilantwa is a coward. He is afraid to face his traditional doctor and instead he sends Diraditsile to ask her.

4.2.4.3. THE CHARACTERS' MOTIVES AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Characters in plays are not real people. Authors achieve meaning by involving characters to convey their message. Kelsall (1985:43) maintains that a play "is an embodied action, the actor impersonates somebody". The character also embodies certain values and forces.

In this section focus will be on the manner in which the characters are portrayed and their traits. Authors achieve their aims by using characters to give readers insight into what is happening in the texts. The speech and actions of the characters reveal their culture and their motives. The plot develops and indications of how people should behave according to their values.

In the exposition (act 1, scene 1) the dramatist of Maragana indicates important points to show different traits and abilities of the characters. The play of Maragana indicates that Mosila is the people's favourite. This is indicated by Molosiwa (The reciter of the chief).

Molosiwa : Dintwa tsa Lophephe di kgotse tlhogo tsa Matsaakgang

Kgomo tsoo-rre di bolola di lemile lophekeke

tsa goroga di lemile digwetla motseng wa Lophephe

go ikanwa ka kgosi Mosila, go kokonwa sapo la ga Mojabeng.

(Wars of Lophephe are satisfied with the heads of Matsaakgang

My father's cows go and graze with happiness

and they arrive back being satisfied in the village of Lophephe.

They all obeyed chief Mosila, and talked about the late Mojabeng.) p.5.

The above quotation clearly indicates the flashback of what happened during Mojabeng's time and most of the people support Mosila. They think he is a good chief, because he wants the well-being of the tribe. They do not want to hear that he is not the right person for the chieftaincy. They have accepted him because he saved them from Mojabeng who was unable to protect and support them.

Mosila, in the complication (act 2, scene 4) likes to undermine other people. This is seen when Lerothodi tells him his dream. He says :

Mosila: (O a tshega.) Ke a utlwa. Ke toro ya sesimanyana eo

Tsamaya o fete o e bolelele barwao

Ba tla tshega go gelela keledi.

(He laughs.) I understand. This is a small boy's dream

Go and tell it to your sons

They will laugh till they cry.) p.27.

This indicates that Mosila cannot take anything from Lerothodi. He feels that he belittles him because he dreams useless dreams. According to him, Lerothodi is as useless as his dream. No one ever mentioned that he was brave in the war.

The complication (act 3, scene 2) is also indicated by Lerothodi. When coming from Mosila he says :

Lerothodi : Fa ke le fa, ga gona yo o nkutlwisang botlhoko jaaka Mosila

Maloba kwa ga gagwe o buile le nna ka lenyatso

Ke gore gompieno Mosila o ntshitse seriti

Sa bogosi mo go nna fa pele ga batshwana ba gagwe.

(If I am here now, no person has ever insulted me like Mosila

A day before, at his home, he talked to me with no respect.

Today Mosila has dishonoured my dignity

of chieftainship in front of his Batswana.) p.36.

Mosila insults Lerothodi by saying his dream is a small boy's dream and he must tell it to his sons so that they can laugh. Mosila defies Lerothodi at his home when Lerothodi comes to him to find out his way forward for the chieftainship. The dream is only a pre-test of Mosila's plans.

According to the Batswana culture, a chief is a chief with his people. People are all equal in the eyes of their chief. No one should be belittled. A chief must be good and be a good listener. If a chief is not good, who is going to respect him? No one will do that. The Batswana culture even says that a bad chief should be deposed so that a good one can take

over. Even though the bad chief can be killed, the proper procedures of succession must be followed.

Mosila tells people that he killed Mojabeng because he was not fit to rule his tribe.

Mosila : Mojabeng ga se yo o umakwang

Sepoko se go buiwang ka sona.

Mojabeng o ne a tlholwa ke go agela Bakwena motse

Ga ke senke a be a umakwa leina mono Lophephe.

(We don't talk about Mojabeng

He is just a ghost we are talking about.

Mojabeng was unable to build a village for the Bakwena

I don't want to hear his name here in Lophephe.) p.6.

On the other side, Lerothodi is a quiet person. In act two, scene two, Lerothodi wants the chieftainship but in a quiet manner. This is clear from his monologue in act 1, scene 5.

Lerothodi : Bonatla ke boipelo jwa dinatla.

Mme boganka bo tle bo tlogele dinatla ka bohutsana.

Bogosi bo bonwa ke yo o ratang go nna kgosi.

Go bolaya motho o tsetswe le ena ke bogatlapa.

(Bravery is the happiness of brave people

But bravery sometimes leaves brave people in agony

Chieftainship is found by the one who wants to become a chief

To kill a person who is your family indicates that you are a coward.) p.21.

He also stresses the point that Mosila has taken over the chieftainship because he ordered him to kill Mojabeng. He did not know that Mosila wanted the chieftaincy too. One may also say that Lerothodi is feeling guilty that he conspired with Mosila to kill his brother, Mojabeng.

In act four, scene one, the crisis begins. Mosila wants to kill Lerothodi because Mosila's people influenced him to take over the chieftainship. He wants to fight Lerothodi and says :

Mosila : Lerothodi go mmona, ke tla mo pipitlela ka lerumo

(When I see Lerothodi, I will kill him with an assegai.) p.42.

The motive behind this killing, one may say, is that Mosila wants to get rid of Lerothodi so that he can become chief. This is a sign of selfishness. But on the other hand, one may say he is worried about the well-being of the tribe. Lerothodi knows that even though Mosila killed Mojabeng, he is not the right person for chieftainship. He knows that according to the Batswana culture his uncle cannot rule. He is not one of the ruling family.

The end of Maragana does not bring a sense of the Batswana culture but rather questions surrounding their cultural identity. According to the Batswana tradition, the legitimate person should have won the fight. But the text does not indicate this. Instead of the legitimate chief winning, the text ends with chaos, conflict and death. Lerothodi who is the rightful person is killed and Mosila becomes chief which shows how good he is. But as Lerothodi's uncle he is not supposed to rule. The uncle according to the Batswana culture, should not rule. This means that the Batswana rule or custom that chieftainship is hereditary, is not working. They are putting the Batswana culture and their cultural identity at stake. In the end of the quarrel no one ever remarks that chieftainship is hereditary.

Magagana indicates that some characters can be influential - Mohurutshe (Molaodi's grandfather) persuades Molaodi in the exposition that he is the rightful person to take over the chieftainship. He indicates that Moilantwa cannot rule because he is not the chief's legitimate son. He says :

Mohurutshe : Bakwena ba teng ba ba go tsetseng,

Bopa mo Lophephe kodu ya gago e thaakanye ditsebe

(Bakwena are here to help you

Speak aloud in Lophephe, so that your voice can confuse the ears.) p.8.

Diraditsile (Enemies have come), Moilantwa's friend, on the other hand, influences Moilantwa as his friend to become chief knowing full well that he cannot be chief. He also goes to the traditional doctors to speak for Moilantwa and help him with medicinal charms.

Diraditsile : Mmemogolo, ke nna tsela ya molomo wa ga Moilantwa.

Wena o letlhaku la boitshireletso

O tshwanetse go bonelwa tsela ka bola.

(Grandmother, I am the way and the mouth of Moilantwa

You are his safety

He must be helped by using medicinal charms.) p.21.

The above quotation stresses the fact that Diraditsile, by going to the traditional healer, has a desire to show Moilantwa how supportive he is, and that he wants him to become chief. As a Batswana tradition, it is proper that you consult the traditional healer before you become a chief in order to charm you or protect you.

In the crisis, act 3, scene 1 Sau, (Moilantwa's uncle) is also of the same idea that Moilantwa should become chief. He says to his sister :

Sau : Ga ke bolo go re a neelwe bogosi jwa Lophephe

Ke ne ke tla mo katisa ke ise ke swe.

(I have long said that he should be given chieftainship of Lophephe.

I would have trained him before I die.) p.28

According to the above quotation, Sau knows well that Moilantwa cannot become chief because he is the son of a concubine. Chieftainship does not belong to him. The only reason he gives for Moilantwa to take the chieftainship is that he wants people to believe that he is the chief's son and he can become chief, or to show the tribe that he also has the right to rule. So, to solve this he must become chief. This shows that he wants Moilantwa to become chief before everything goes wrong. It is just that Sau wants to force things that are not possible.

In a monologue during the crisis of the play (act 4, scene 1) Molaodi threatens that he will kill everyone even his close relatives so that he can get the chieftaincy. He will use magagana to remove his enemies. He says :

Molaodi : Ke tla ikanya magagana go sutisa bakgoreletsi ba me.

Ke tla lefela maikano a me ka lona letsatsi je.

(I will trust the battle axe to remove my enemies.

I will pay for my oath today.) p.37

These words indicate that Molaodi will never rest until he gets what he wants. He will hate all the Bakwena tribe without forgiving them. He will even kill his own family. Molaodi's motive is to get what he thinks is rightfully his. He feels that he will do whatever it takes with

his battle axe to get his chieftainship. Even though he knows that to become chief, does not mean that you must fight because it passes from father to son. Even though the tribe knows that Molaodi's father was a chief, the tribe doesn't want to accept him as chief because they say he caused problems to the Bakwena. They want to ignore their customs.

In both texts some of the characters indicate that chieftainship is not hereditary. It is clear that chieftaincy even in the past belonged to people who wanted to become chief, or who were brave enough and could fight for it. It is sometimes not a question of tradition but also a question of who is who or who has the most power. For the Batswana cultural identity, I don't think this is accurate or proper. A chief must be born to it. If not, the long standing Batswana rule of succession is undermined.

Rapodi (one of Mosila's men) convinces Mosila that he has protected their chieftainship. He says chieftainship belongs to him because they have accepted him. According to Rapodi's speech, it is clear that he knows that Mosila is not the rightful chief. They accepted him because he killed Mojabeng. For the Batswana culture, it is right to kill a bad chief, but not to become chief.

In act two, scene two, Lerothodi's people also stress that they only know one chief that is Lerothodi. Lerothodi also does not deny the fact that he is a chief. He says: "I know I am the chief of the Bakwena but Mosila has worn the leopard skin here in Lophephe". The leopard skin is a traditional sign that you are the rightful chief. Lerothodi's words reveal his anger against Mosila.

The fight between Lerothodi and Mosila for chieftainship indicates that legitimacy is not so important to them. They do not have respect for the chieftainship. According to them chieftainship can be taken by force and only the strong one can win.

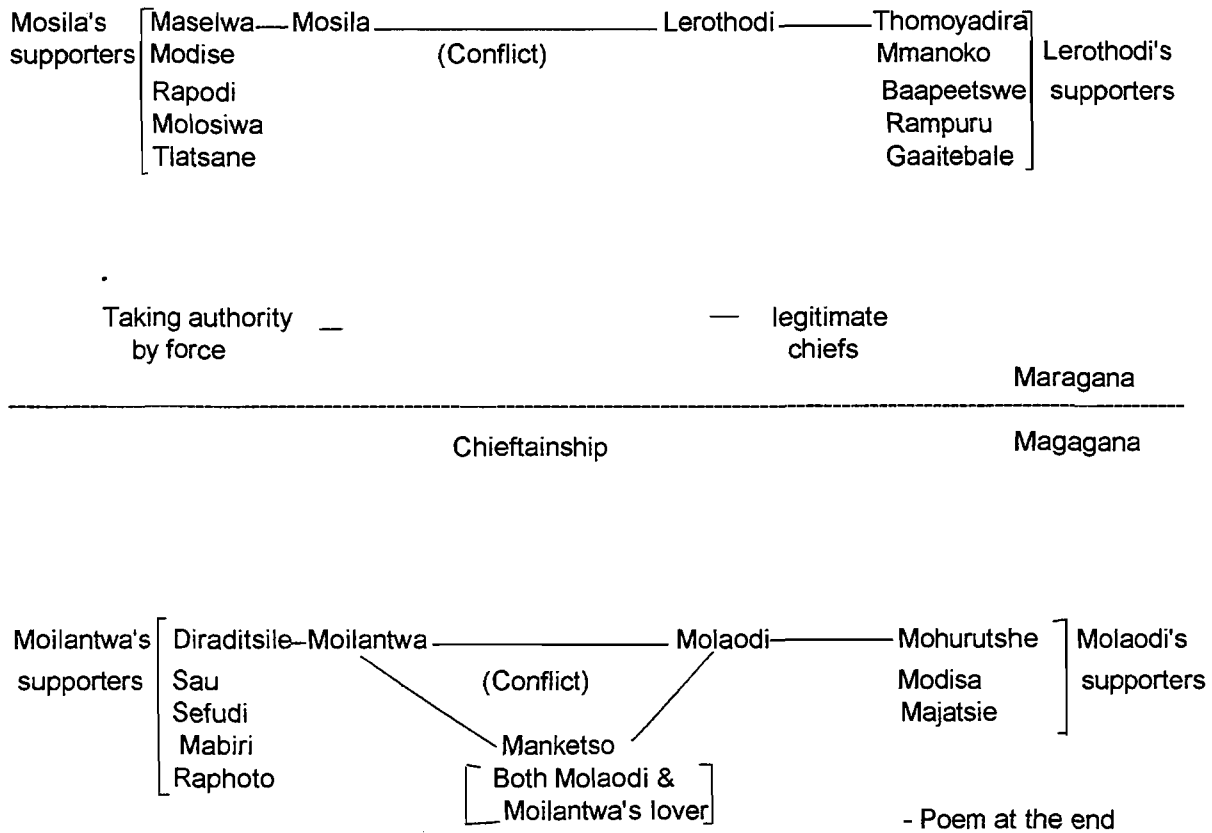
In a monologue in act 5, scene 3, Mosila tells the story of his life. When he was still young, he says, he trusted his strength, now he is old and angry because he wants to become chief. He states that time and again people warned him against Lerothodi. Lerothodi wants to kill him and take the chieftainship. Lerothodi is a smart young upstart.

In the exposition of Magagana, Mohurutshe advises Molaodi to take the chieftainship and tells him that it belongs to him. Mompoti, one of the counsellors, says Molaodi can make an issue of chieftainship if he likes, but that it is controlled by culture. Raphoto also stresses this point and says only our culture can resolve this.

Chiefs are the leaders of the tribe and people must respect their authority. For the Batswana chieftaincy, Mosila and Lerothodi have overlooked their culture. They have no respect for their culture.

The analysis above indicates that characters in this play have little respect for their culture. Everyone is in need of power. They want to satisfy their personal ambition. The fight for chieftainship here causes division in the tribe, and ruins the Batswana culture and their cultural identity.

Magagana also has the same cultural conflict. Moilantwa wants the chieftainship but he is not the chief's son. The rightful person Molaodi, is denied his rights as a future chief. The culture of the tribe is at stake. Moilantwa and Molaodi do not consider legitimacy. Chieftainship is taken by the one who has the power. They do not obey the rules of succession as the Batswana culture suggests.

Diagram 5. The power struggle in Maragana and Magagana

The above diagram indicates that both Maragana and Magagana deal with the theme of chieftainship. The problem in both texts are of legitimacy and personal ambition. Mosila in Maragana is Lerothodi's uncle. So he cannot become chief. He also thinks he should become chief because he killed Mojabeng. Lerothodi, on the other hand, feels that he should become chief because he is the rightful person. Hence the fight.

Moilantwa in Magagana also cannot become chief because he is the son of a concubine and the legitimate person is Molaodi. In Maragana we have Mosila and Lerothodi and in Magagana we have Molaodi and Moilantwa. All the main characters of both texts fight to get chieftainship. Each main character has his supporters. Lerothodi and Moilantwa are the legitimate chiefs according to the Batswana culture. Mosila and Moilantwa are not legitimate. They want the chieftainship which does not belong to them.

Mmanketso also makes it difficult between Molaodi and Moilantwa by falling in love with both of them and spurring them on. She enhances the conflict between the two.

The supporters of the main characters in both texts play a major role in influencing the characters to fight for the chieftainship. No one reminded them about the tradition of the Batswana that a chief is never elected.

In conclusion one may say the plays show that transgressing the rule of succession leads to disaster. They also indicate that the rule needs to be bent at times to make sure that the tribe gets a good chief. But chieftaincy, according to the Batswana culture, is not for everyone who needs power, but it is a matter of succession and giving the legitimate person the right to rule.

The breaking of the Batswana rule of succession in these texts has a negative effect. The Batswana believe that chieftainship is sacred and it is instituted by the ancestors. The fights in these texts, one may say, did not satisfy the ancestors because they all die. They did not protect them as we believe the ancestors protect the chief and chieftainship. That is why the main characters do not reach their aim and why Moilantwa, Molaodi and Lerothodi die in the end.

4.2.4.4. CONCLUSION ON CHARACTERS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Characters in both the texts reveal the Batswana cultural identity. Their speech and behaviour are some of the things by which they show the Batswana culture.

In both Maragana and Magagana, a war breaks out as a result of the fight for chieftainship. By fighting for chieftainship, the author indicates that sometimes people fight for chieftainship to straighten up things or to challenge the ideology of their culture

4.2.4.5. THEME AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The theme is the central idea of a story. There are various devices the author can use to convey his ideas to the reader.

The characters play a very important role in constituting the theme, which is associated with concepts such as the author's intention, message, purpose and meaning. The concept involves the text's total meaning.

Since the rule of succession is transgressed in Maragana and Magagana, one may say that the traditional way of succession is the best way to avoid the fight over chieftainship.

Both Maragana and Magagana open with the introduction of chieftainship in Lophephe. The main characters all want to become chief because they are all from the royal family and everyone feels that he is the legitimate person.

In Maragana, the aim of killing Mojabeng indicates a misunderstanding between Mosila and Lerothodi. Lerothodi does not know that his uncle will change his mind and demand chieftainship. Both want to kill Mojabeng to save the tribe as he is weak. Mosila kills Mojabeng. Lerothodi also fights for the chieftainship because he is born to be chief. It is also amazing to see the tribe supporting Mosila just because he shows his bravery by killing Mojabeng. They do not see that Mosila has betrayed Lerothodi by accepting to kill Mojabeng. Do they forget that the rightful person is Lerothodi? This indicates that people are of Mosila's notion and approves that a chief can be elected as long as he can prove that he can help and protect the tribe. Mosila is not the legitimate chief but the tribe favours him because he is strong and indicates that he wants only the best for the tribe.

In act two, scene two, where the plot reaches its highest stage of complication, Rapodi tries to help Mosila to become chief.

Rapodi : 'Nakong tse, go busa banna ba ba lekanang le wena, kgosi

Banna ba ba boifiwang ka mokgwasa le monko, kgosi

Banna ba e reng dikodu tsa bona di kidimela,

Dikgwa di rutlege ka metswi le dikala.

(This is the time when men like you should be chief.

Men whom people are afraid of, their footsteps and their smell

Men, when speaking, their voices tremble

And the trees come out with their roots and stems.) p.26.

The above quotation (act 2 scene 2) in the complication indicates that Mosila is a brave and feared man and Rapodi thinks that he can protect them. That is why the tribe accepted him as their chief even though they know that he is not the rightful person. Mosila is that man who,

when speaking their voices tremble, and the trees come out with their roots and stems, stresses Mosila's bravery.

4.2.4.6. SETTING, TIME AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Modise introduces Mosila killing Mojabeng, so that he can get the chieftainship which does not belong to him according to custom.

Places like "Lekgotla", people in the streets, people under the Mmupudu trees and Mosila shows the Batswana culture. This causes the reader to associate with their culture. This rural environment reveals their culture and their life style.

The setting of Magagana is historical and includes rural places like Lophephe where the Bakwena settled, at the riverside in the bush or forest where one can notice herd boys herding cattle, where people still live under the leadership of chiefs and their regiments like the Mabiri and Majatsie. People are still killed by throwing them into caves like the Kobokwe Cave.

The author also mentions places like Dithlojaneng where people meet during times of war. This kind of setting as well as the lifestyle makes the reader familiar with the Batswana tradition. All the places are named in Setswana. Other parts of the play are set in rural places so that the reader may not have doubts about what the author is trying to reveal about the Batswana custom. Places like the kraal where the chief should be buried are, for example, included.

Time in Maragana and Magagana plays an important role as Magagana is a continuation of Maragana (Internal squabbles). The events and characters of both the texts occurred in the past. Magagana deals only with traditional time and Maragana indicates the traditional period where we see Mosila killing his uncle Mojabeng. This is also happening nowadays.

Magagana also deals with the traditional period where chief Letsholo is buried in his kraal. This was the Batswana's customary way of burying their chiefs, though this is no longer practised.

4.2.4.7. CHIEFTAINSHIP AND ITS PART IN CONSTRUCTING A BATSWANA CULTURAL IDENTITY

Mosila knows that the Bakwena chieftainship does not belong to him. He as the uncle cannot rule. Taking the chieftainship by force is against the Batswana culture. He only wants to do so to gain power.

Both the texts fail to show the importance of hereditary factors. The main characters all go against the Batswana culture. They destroy the important aspect of culture that brings out the Batswana cultural identity.

4.2.4.8. THE RELATION BETWEEN AUTHORITY AND CULTURAL IDENTITY AS PORTRAYED IN THE TEXTS

The relation to authority in these texts is one of very strong respect and obedience. The people follow all the instructions given by their chief even though in some cases it is not possible. Even if they do criticise their chiefs, they still respect them. As their traditional leaders, it is normal and proper that they are given respect by their people.

In the complication, act 1, scene 3 in Maragana, Mosila as the future chief of the Bakwena is respected. We do not know whether this happens because he killed Mojabeng, or because he desires the well-being of the Bakwena tribe. The respect is clearly expressed by his supporters, Rapodi, Molosiwa, Modise, Tlatsane, Kgetshane and Maselwa. They showed this respect until the end. Mosila is also happy that his people obey him when he says :

Mosila : Modise, o motho wa me
 O motho wa ga Mosila-a-Moruleng
 E bile o matlho le ditsebe tsa me.
 (Modise, you belong to me
 You are Mosila's people of Moruleng
 And you are my eyes and my ears.) p.10

The above quotation implies that Mosila is using his people as spies to get the chieftaincy. He makes people believe that they belong to him and they must act according to his authority even if they do not like it.

It seems that Mosila is very happy that Modise is a very good spy of his tribe. He warns him of everything or every step the tribe wishes to take.

In the climax, (act 5, scene 4) Mosila is persuading his people to carry out his instructions even in dangerous situations. They obey his instructions even if they are sometimes difficult.

Mosila : Rapodi, Nkatamela! Ntwa e ntsi thata!

Seatla sa me se a nkimela, se sule setlatsu.

Ke sitwa ke go tshwara rumo ja me.

(Rapodi, come nearer to me, the fight is heavy.

My hand is heavy for me, my hand is numb.

I cannot hold my spear properly.) p.60.

The situation has reached its climax and Mosila is now becoming afraid. He wants his men to support him fully so that he would not be killed.

Rapodi in the climax (act 5, scene 4) agrees that they will fight next to him so that they can help their chief. Mosila again instructs them to help him when he fights Lerothodi and he says :

Mosila : Kala tsa me nkatamelang!

Lerothodi o a mpatla, ga a esi.

Lesomo la gagwe ke lele, le mo setse morago.

(My people, come closer to me!

Lerothodi is looking for me, and he is not alone.

There are his people, they are right behind him.) p.62.

The quotation above indicates that Mosila is now in danger. He wants to kill Lerothodi but he is afraid of him. He forces his people to support and surround him so that he is protected against Lerothodi. He avoids a direct confrontation with Lerothodi because he knows that he cannot fight him alone. Lerothodi is brave. Mosila does not care about being loyal to his culture. He causes conflict among his tribe by looking for the chieftainship which is culturally not his.

Lerothodi's people also respect him and obey his instructions and are willing to do whatever he wishes. According to the Tswana culture people must be loyal and must respect authority. They should follow instructions without complaining. It is believed that culture teaches people how to respect their elders and be obedient. The characters in this play are loyal and respectful. This is clear from Thomoyadira in act three, scene two at the tribal office when he speaks to Lerothodi. He wants Lerothodi to stand up on his feet and do what is right for him.

Thomoyadira stresses the point that he is willing to support Lerothodi no matter what. He again adds that :

Thomoyadira : Ke senatla e bile ke seganka se se sa itsemeletseng

Nna, Thomoyadira, ke tla dira sa taelo ya gago!

(I am brave and a strong person who is not lazy

I, Thomoyadira, I will do what you instruct me to do.) p.38

Mosila's people also indicate this loyalty when they are at the battle field, promising him that they will stand by his side in the fight.

Rapodi : Rotlhe re tla lwa re bapile nao, Mokwena!

(We will all fight next to you, Mokwena!) p.60

The above quotation indicates that Mosila's people are willing to support him fully. They want him to become chief and not Lerothodi because he saved the tribe from a bad chief, Mojabeng.

Lerothodi's people are also just waiting for instructions. This is indicated from his speech when he says :

Lerothodi : O a utlwala, Thomoyadira, fa o le motho wa ga Lerothodi

Ga re tlhole re re ka moso

Matlhape a ga Sebetwane a ile

Bakwena ba ga Lerothodi ba letile.

Lefoko la bofelo le letile loleme la me go le bua.

(It is clear, Thomoyadira, that you belong to Lerothodi

We don't wait for tomorrow

Sebetwane's cattle have gone

The Bakwena of Lerothodi are waiting.

The final word should be given by me.) p.38.

Lerothodi and his people give Sebetwane many cattle so that he can send many soldiers to help kill Mosila and his people.

Lerothodi here plots with his people to take the authority away from Mosila. He also feels the necessity of stopping Mosila because the chieftaincy does not belong to him.

In Magagana people also respect authority. They willingly take instructions from Molaodi and Moilantwa. Here we see Letsholo who is very sick and old but who still respects his people. This is indicated in his speech where he is speaking to the ghost.

Letsholo : Fa o ka nkitsisa morwao,

Ke tla mo abela mhama wa khumo ya me

Ke ba ke mo rebolela bogosi jwa Lophephe.

Diphularong tsa me.

(If you can tell me the name of your son,

I will give him part of my wealth

I will also give him the chieftainship of Lophephe

When I die.) p.15.

The name of the ghost's son in this quotation seems to be very important to chief Letsholo. He wants to get rid of the ghost. He is afraid of the ghost. He is tired and wants to end the discussion. On the other hand he is afraid to give his final word before he knows the name of the person who should get this chieftainship. The ghost (Mohurutshe), however, does not reveal the name. He does not want the chief to know him. Chief Letsholo is afraid to cause chaos among his people.

Mohurutshe carries out the chief's instruction by keeping the battle-axe safe for Molaodi so that he can get it when he is old enough. The battle-axe also symbolises the bravery of the chief. It can also be regarded as a symbol of authority, office and legitimacy. It shows that sometimes chiefs have to be cruel and kill with the battle-axe when necessary to straighten things out.

Mohurutshe : Tsaya selepe sa magagane ke se

Selepe se, e ne e le sa ga Makaba, rrrarraago.

(Take this battle axe

This axe belonged to Makaba, your grandfather.) p.23

This shows that Mohurutshe can also keep important secrets of his chief. He never tells anyone about the battle axe until he hands it to Molaodi. He is a person that can be trusted by his chief and very loyal.

Every Motswana belongs to a certain regiment. Molaodi has his own regiment that is Majatsie, and Moilantwa also belongs to the Mabiri regiment. They obey Molaodi and Moilantwa and this shows ways of respecting authority. These people take instructions from Moilantwa and Molaodi because they are the leaders of their regiments. The Batswana culture also stresses respect to anyone who is older than you, especially parents. Diraditsile (Moilantwa's friend) indicates that he wants Moilantwa to become chief because he is his friend. He advises him and influences him to use medicinal charms to take the chieftaincy. He wants all people to say that Moilantwa is the chief of Lophephe. Diraditsile in the complication (act 2, scene 4) meets Molaodi's herd boy on the other side of the village next to the river and asks him whose cattle that is :

Diraditsile : Heela! Mosimane ke wena!

Ke kgomo tsoorra mang tseo?

(Hey! You boy!

Whose cattle are those?) p.23

The herd boy innocently and surprisingly tells Diraditsile that it is Molaodi's cattle and how brave he is. Diraditsile is very angry to hear that Molaodi is a brave person and that he is a chief. He is very furious and instructs the herd boy to shut his mouth and asks him that :

Diraditsile : Molaodi e ne e le mogale wa kae?

A ga o ise o utlwalele fa kgosi e le Moilantwa?

(Where was Molaodi a brave person?

Didn't you hear that Moilantwa is the chief?) p.23

Diraditsile's questions force the herd boy to tell him that Moilantwa is not his chief.

Modisa : Le go ka! Moilantwa ga a kake a nna kgosi ya me!

(Never! Moilantwa cannot be my chief!) p.23

In the above quotation the herd boy stresses the point that he cannot be ruled by Moilantwa, because he knows that Moilantwa is not the chief's son. According to the herd boy, the chief is Molaodi, the legitimate person. This causes Diraditsile to beat the herd boy to death. The exchange of words between the herd boy and Diraditsile clearly indicates that Molaodi is the son of Lerothodi and according to the Batswana culture, he is the rightful chief. Diraditsile does not mention Moilantwa's father, because he knows that he is not the chief's son. These indications show that Moilantwa cannot be the chief. The herd boy points out that Moilantwa cannot be his chief. In their discussion Diraditsile reveals that Moilantwa is braver than Molaodi to give the impression he is the right person for that chieftainship and meaning that the bravest person will take chieftainship not according to the rule of succession. The beating of the herd boy by Diraditsile serves to develop the plot to the crisis with a war breaking out.

This is also seen when Molaodi instructs his regiment to throw Diraditsile into the cave because he has beaten Molaodi's herd boy to death.

Molaodi : Bofang dinao tsa gagwe le diatla ka kgobati!

Mo digeleng logageng ka bopelokgale!

Mmolaya motho ga a na bosekelo.

(Tie up his feet and hands with a string!

Throw him into the cave with bravery!

One who kills a person cannot be listened to.) p.31.

Molaodi does not see any reason to spare the life of Diraditsile because he is a murderer. The only suitable punishment for him is death. The beating of the herd boy by Diraditsile also is the final cause of the long-standing conflict about the chieftaincy between Molaodi and Moilantwa.

The same applies to Moilantwa when he instructs his regiment to fight Molaodi's people. He says :

Moilantwa : Letsa lonaka, re tlhasele, mophato wa me.

(Blow the horn, we fight, my regiment.) p.32.

From the above quotations it is clear that people willingly obey the authority of their chiefs and they are fond of their culture. They want to keep the Batswana tradition intact. Even though the main characters force them to become involved in their conflict, they still respect them in loyalty. The personal ambition of the main characters causes them to fight.

In concluding this section on chieftainship, one may say Maragana starts with a good situation under a good chief Mosila and Magagana with a bad situation where chief Letsholo is in his dying bed and the tribe is afraid that he will leave them without a chief. The situation moves through a conflict between aspiring chiefs to a worse situation where some of the main characters have been killed. All the main characters want to be in power, but their ambitions are destroyed by their quarrelling and fights. The conflict in Magagana is that Moilantwa wants to take chieftaincy that does not belong to him. Molaodi, who is the legitimate person tries to stop this. At the end the tribe of the Bakwena is left without a chief. The tradition and chieftainship is at stake. The motive behind the battle is that the main characters want to show people that chieftaincy is not a question of tradition but that anyone can get it if he is brave enough and that he can protect the tribe. These efforts fail as both die. In both texts, the author plays out the age-old problem that people want to satisfy their personal ambition without being concerned about the tribe's well-being.

Moilantwa and Molaodi are killed in the war with the Ndebele. Both the texts fit well in the time of the Difaqane where people killed each other. The poems also teach people that even if you are brave, death is for all people. No one will survive this. The poem also indicates that death has left the tribe alone. The future of the tribe is dark without a chief.

The struggle to become chief in both plays is not portrayed in the same way. In Maragana, the legitimate chief Lerothodi is denied the right to become chief because he has not killed Mojabeng, and on the other hand Mosila becomes chief because he has proved himself to be brave by killing Mojabeng and the tribe feels that he can protect them. In Magagana, the legitimate chief, Molaodi, is also denied his rights. Moilantwa, the son of a concubine, wants the chieftainship, although he knows that he cannot rule according to the Batswana tradition. The difference in both texts is that in Maragana only Lerothodi dies and in Magagana both Molaodi and Moilantwa die. Mosila wants the chieftaincy because he is the one who killed

Mojabeng and Lerothodi on the other hand says that Mosila is his uncle, he cannot become chief. His aim of killing Mojabeng is meant for the good of the tribe. The difference in their arguments is that Molaodi thinks that the chieftaincy belongs to him and his grandfather. Mohurutshe confirms this. Moilantwa is the son of a concubine, and he cannot rule. The similarities in these two texts are that all main characters are fighting for the chieftainship of Lophephe of the Bakwena tribe and they are all from the royal family. They all want to satisfy their ambition and they are primarily interested in the well-being of the tribe. They all have regiments who support them strongly. The second play Magagana suggests that fighting for the chieftaincy is a futile exercise and ends in a tragedy.

In both Maragana and Magagana the attitude in connection with authority has not changed. People still believe that the chief is an important person in the tribe. They strongly respect the chief, obey him and do whatever he says.

Both texts clearly indicate that loyalty to and respect for authority is an important aspect of the Batswana cultural identity. Both texts indicate the rightful chiefs who should be ruling. Maragana indicate that according to the Batswana, if a person fails as chief, he must be killed, hence the death of Mojabeng. The texts indicate that there may be some chaos if there is no legitimate chief to succeed the outgoing chief. There will be fights and the strong one will come to power. According to the texts, and according to the Batswana culture, chieftainship is hereditary but in both texts, the author ignores it. Lerothodi and Molaodi are partly legitimate people who should rule the Bakwena society according to their culture. Mosila gets what he wants by fighting. Unfortunately in Magagana both the main characters die. One may conclude that fights about chieftaincy are stupid, lead to tragedy and weaken the tribe.

In conclusion, both texts indicate a strong, respectful and loyal attitude with regard to authority. People respect their chiefs and take instructions from them without question. They are always willing to do what is expected of them. Concerning conflicts between legitimacy and ability, both texts indicate that in conflict with the customary rule of hereditary, chieftainship can be challenged in some instances. Conflicts between legitimacy and ability cannot be resolved peacefully, however, the contenders have to fight it out. Sometimes this has disastrous results.

4.2.4.9. THE ROLE OF THE CHIEFS IN MARAGANA AND MAGAGANA

The role of the chief in every tribe or society is very important. At the head of every tribe there is the chief, and the government of the tribe is in his hands.

The author here wants to indicate that even in the past, people fought about chieftainship. Chieftainship is here at stake. There is no hereditary succession. They are breaking one of the rules of the Batswana cultural identity, viz. that chieftainship passes from father to son. The fight between Mosila and Lerothodi is an indication of what is happening today. People seem to forget their culture which says that a chief is never elected.

Modise in Maragana succeeds in showing that even in the past it was easy for a brave person to take over the chieftainship. The ensuing fight is an indication that everyone wants to become chief. People, i.e. Mosila has no respect for legitimate authority. The role of the chief as a leader of the tribe is at stake. The Batswana tradition is not respected in this text either. Power rules and not the Batswana culture that says the legitimate person must be the chief. According to the tradition, “Bogosi ke kupe bo a dibelwa”, meaning (chieftainship is sacred and it should be respected).

The above quotation clearly indicates that Mohurutshe confirms to Molaodi that chieftainship belongs to him. He must not be ashamed of what is meant for him. He must stand up and fight for his rights.

As a leader and a born chief, Molaodi has to fight for his rights to lead the tribe and support it in times of war and other crises. Molaodi has to become chief because Letsholo has no son to become his successor. Letsholo is the younger brother of Lerothodi’s father. That is why Molaodi is the rightful person for this chieftainship.

In act two, scene three, the crisis begins where Moilantwa wants to fight for the chieftainship. He wants to become chief even if he knows that he cannot be a chief according to Batswana custom. In scene five Diraditsile also complicates the problem by beating the herd boy for not saying that Moilantwa is the chief.

In act 5, scene 5, the plot reaches its climax where Molaodi and Moilantwa have to face each other and fight. Before the fight starts, however, the war between the Bakwena and the Ndebele breaks out. In the denouement, both Molaodi and Moilantwa are killed.

The texts do not clearly reveal how the Batswana culture works concerning chieftainship. They indicate that if you want to become a chief, you must fight for it. No rule of succession has been followed. Mosila and Lerothodi fight to gain power. The aim of their struggle is to satisfy their personal ambition. They do not care about the well-being of the tribe. According to the Batswana culture, chieftainship is hereditary. No one should fight for it. It must pass from father to son.

4.2.4.10. QUESTIONS THAT TEXTS RAISE ABOUT CHIEFTAINSHIP AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Both Maragana and Magagana have the same problem. People are fighting for the chieftaincy which is not rightfully theirs.

The question in Maragana is why Mosila does not refrain from killing Mojabeng. Was it his ambition to kill him? Mosila says he killed Mojabeng with his own hand. That is why he thinks he must become chief. His motive is that he wants to show Lerothodi and the tribe that he can be a good chief. He wants to show them that chieftaincy is not necessarily hereditary. It can move from father to uncle. He indicates that the Batswana culture or law can be broken to some extent. He wants the well-being of the tribe that is why he killed Mojabeng who was unable to serve the needs of the tribe.

From Modise's plays Maragana and Magagana it is clear that legitimate power is an important concern in Batswana society. The same problem figures in Bogosi kupe where the tribe is worried about the plan of Serokolo to take over the chieftainship.

4.3. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND HONOURING THE ANCESTORS : MOJI MOTLHABI AND BOGOSI KUPE

4.3.1. INTRODUCTION

Moji Motlhabi and Bogosi kupe are quite old. Moji Motlhabi (One who eats and kills) was written by D.P. Moloto and was published in 1967. Bogosi kupe (kingship is sacred) written

by D.P.S. Monyaise was also published in 1967. Moji Motlhabi has thirteen chapters and Bogosi kupe consists of five chapters.

Moji Motlhabi and Bogosi kupe demonstrate the importance of the ancestors and how this influences the culture of the Batswana. Modern aspects are reflected in these texts. In Moji Motlhabi this is shown when Motlhabi refuses to marry Mesele and wants to marry his cousin Botshe. In Bogosi Kupe this also emerges from the fact that Matlhodi waits for her lover Modimoeng whom she loved from the onset, not Oshupile (He has pointed it) whom she married according to her parents' wishes. Matlhodi is reunited with her lover in the end.

This section will investigate the honouring of ancestors, the plot, characters, theme, and conflict as part of cultural identity in these two texts. It will indicate how the ancestors are portrayed in these two texts and will show the influence of the ancestors and their relation to the tribe. It will also focus on the role the ancestors play in the construction of cultural identity in these two texts. In these novels, however, chieftaincy and the ancestors are intimately connected.

In whatever they do, the Batswana first ask their ancestors to guide and help them. According to Lye & Murray (1980:123), "the ancestors take an active interest in the well-fare of their living descendants". The Batswana believe that their dead grandparents are there to help them. Hammond-Tooke (1981:87) supports this idea that "the ancestors are the dead members of the bilateral kin of group who have been formally accorded this status by a constitutive ritual at the family shrine". The Batswana are fond of directing their activities towards the ancestors rather than towards God.

4.3.2. SUMMARY OF BOGOSI KUPE

The events in Bogosi kupe centres around Obakeng (Praise Him), Matlhodi (Lentils) and Modimoeng (What is God) at Phiritona and again at Magogong where we find the Bakwena tribe. The plot starts with the death of Oshupile. The text further gives us a flashback to the love of Matlhodi and Modimoeng. Matlhodi's marriage to Oshupile makes her whole life miserable because she never loved him. Before her marriage, Matlhodi is blessed with a son called Obakeng (Praise Him) whose father is Modimoeng.

Oshupile dies in the field 20 years later while he is ploughing and his death is a blow to Matlhodi. She is left alone with her son. Obakeng decides to sell his oxen because they are old. After buying other oxen, at Sefatlhane (Zeerust), he steals some of the government's cattle on his way home. He goes straight to the forest of Dimo to hide the cows and unexpectedly meets his father, Modimoeng, not knowing that this is his father.

The theft is reported to the police. Sergeant Botipe does the investigation. He searches everywhere but the cows are nowhere to be found.

Sergeant Botipe wants to protect the government's cattle just like Tukisang and his sons want to protect their cattle from being taken by the tribe as a punishment. The situation ends in their death.

Tukisang (Matlhodi's brother) accuses Obakeng at the lekgotla that he stole fencing material to extend his yard, but this is not true. The case of Tukisang (Burn it) and Obakeng sets the ball rolling. This leads to the death of Tukisang after he has been fined. After a long discussion, Obakeng is found not guilty and Tukisang is fined a cow. He tells his sons about the case and they kill the people who come to take the cow. The messengers never return and the tribe gets worried. Another group is sent accompanied by Tukisang. When they are about to arrive at Tukisang's son's place, they see that their hut is burning. Tukisang quickly runs to rescue his sons, but unfortunately dies in the fire. Motlhoiwa (One who is hated) (who always warned the chief about Serokolo's plans) is also kidnapped by Tukisang's sons but Obakeng and Modimoeng come to his rescue. Obakeng and Modimoeng take Tukisang's sons and leave them to die in a cave. Obakeng is acting in revenge since they once beat him up and threw him into the river.

In chapter 4, where the plot reaches its crisis, the chief announces at the kgotla that there are people who hold meetings during the night planning to kill him or to take his chieftainship and that he does not condone this. After telling them, the chief asks Sergeant Botipe to remark on this. Botipe explains that chieftainship is "Kupe", meaning that it does not belong or cannot be taken by everyone who feels he wants it. Sergeant Botipe compares and contrasts chieftainship with a white cow. The cow is left to go into the forest. No one must take it or look after it, it will die on its own. Chieftainship is like that.

Serokolo (one of the tribal counsellors) knows that Botipe is telling the truth. He plans to take over the chieftainship. He kidnaps the chief so that he can kill him. In the forest of Dimo, they meet Motlhoiwa (one of the villagers) who rescues the chief from his murderers. Modimoeng and Obakeng take Serokolo and his men into the cave with the intention of executing them.

In the meantime Sergeant Botipe is still searching for the cattle. He meets Modimoeng, Obakeng and Motlhoiwa in the forest. Serokolo nearly dies in the cave but Modimoeng rescues him because the chief told them to look after him. Botipe sends him to the hospital and he dies there. Modimoeng returns home to his lover Matlhodi. In the end, Serokolo who wanted to become chief by force, dies in hospital. This shows that he wanted to do something against the wishes of the ancestors. Chieftainship is sacred and is a gift from the ancestors.

Towards the end (Chapter 5) Obakeng meets his biological father. One may ask oneself why Obakeng from the beginning told the police that his name is Modimoeng? Perhaps this is the way the ancestors wanted to reveal the secret of Modimoeng so that Obakeng can know his real father, or we can say instinct made him aware that his father is Modimoeng. The meeting of Obakeng and Modimoeng made it possible for Matlhodi and Modimoeng to meet again. Obakeng's identity is now revealed. At the end the opponents of the chief are eliminated and order is restored because it is the wish of the ancestors.

In the end the novel shows that chieftainship is protected by the God or ancestors. Serokolo who wanted to usurp the chieftainship is dead because he went against the wishes of the ancestors.

The two novels, Moji Motlhabi and Bogosi kupe, demonstrate that the Batswana have a strong belief in ancestors. In Moji Motlhabi, it is believed that Moji's people are protected by ancestors at Modimolle (God has eaten), also sometimes called Hill of Protection. The Bataung believe that their ancestors live inside the cave in the mountain to protect them. In Bogosi kupe, chieftainship is protected by ancestors so that it cannot be taken by each and every person.

4.3.3. SUMMARY OF MOJI MOTLHABI

Moji Motlhabi is an old book, published in 1967 by D.P Moloto. The novel is still suitable today for revealing and maintaining the importance of Batswana culture, especially to indicate how strongly the Batswana believe in ancestors.

In the exposition, chapter 1, Moji Motlhabi's parents are killed in a fight with the Batlokwa tribe at Mmehane, in Odi. The Batlokwa defeat the Bataung tribe. Moji and his sister, Mmabana (Mother of children), and a group of people flee the village. They arrive at the mountain called Modimolle (God has eaten) and settle there. The Batlokwa follow them. The Bataung climb the mountain and roll stones down onto the Batlokwa tribe to kill them. Moji manages to defeat the Batlokwa. They settle at Modimolle and build their houses there. There is a cave inside this mountain. They believe that their ancestors live there and will help them to defeat their enemies. Moji calls Modimolle a mountain or a place of protection.

After several years at Modimolle (Chapter 2) a white man comes to Moji's village. He is a missionary. Moji's people think their ancestors have sent him to protect them. Moji regards him as an albino. According to their culture albinos are not accepted and he must be killed so that the ancestors would not become angry and leave them without rain. Moji does not kill the reverend because he thinks he is a traditional healer and can protect them from their enemies. He also thinks that he can use him as a bodyguard at the gate of the tribe. They refer to him as Ramosweu (White man). Moji places Ramosweu with the other foreigners at Bosele. The reverend reads the Bible and prays every day.

In the course of the book Moji develops into a cruel tyrant. When he is dancing, all the women must ululate to show that they are happy and interested. As soon as he notices that someone is against that, she or he gets a severe punishment. People have to laugh even though they are against what Moji is doing. He hates people who laugh - he becomes angry when Ramosweu laughs when he speaks with Moji. Moji does not want to see people's teeth. He thinks that when people laugh, they are making a fool of him. Moji likes to be praised.

Moji believes strongly in traditional healers. He regards Mogaga as his tribe's traditional healer. He trusts that he can protect his people. He orders Mogaga to build the snake of the Bataung which he believes protects the tribe. When his cows go out for grazing, the

traditional healer must first charm them to protect them. The belief in traditional healers is also indicated when he sees ants fighting. To him, it is not just a fight. He instructs Mogaga to throw the bones. The interpretation is that the locusts are coming to destroy their crops.

The characters in Moji Motlhabi hate what Moji is doing. They are afraid of Moji and angry that he kills their children by burning them with fire to show how powerful he is. Even if Moji kills their sons, they have to pretend that nothing is happening to their children because he can also kill them. This also indicates how people respect their authority and this is also experienced in Bogosi kupe. The characters in Bogosi kupe want Serokolo and his people alive to account for their actions.

In the Batswana culture, respect for authority plays an important part. No one should go against the chieftaincy but here Serokolo breaks the Batswana custom and wants something that does not belong to him. It must pass from father to son. Chieftainship is hereditary according to the Batswana culture.

Every year, the Bataung honours their ancestors by celebrating the feast of the new crops. During this ceremony, Moji is given a wife to thank the ancestors for bringing rain. After the harvest, crops are brought to Moji for safe keeping. It is only Moji and his sister, Mmabana, who know where the crops are kept.

After many years in Modimolle, Moji and his people experience drought. There is no food. Moji begins to feed his people with the crops he took from them for many years. He gives them food and milk. People do not know where the food comes from. Moji makes them believe that it comes from their ancestors.

Moji is afraid of witchcraft. When going to a tribal meeting, he makes his men lie down and walks on them. He does not want to touch the ground in order to prevent his enemies from discovering his foot prints.

One morning (Chapter 3) an Indian man arrives at Modimolle. He is named Setlabosane (Small boy). He is also placed at Bosele. He comes to Modimolle as a business man looking for the Batlokwa treasures, diamonds, necklaces and bangles. Moji believes that all the goods

that Setlabosane is selling, have to do with witchcraft. Moji's wives and his daughter Botshe (Something sweet) wear expensive bangles made of diamonds and gold. Setlabosane decides to use Botshe's beauty so that he can have diamonds and gold.

Botshe is Mothobi's cousin as her father is Mothobi's uncle. Mothobi (Moji's nephew) engages Botshe to be his future wife. Kgaladi wishes that Mothobi would rather marry his daughter. Kgaladi forces Setlabosane to fall in love with Botshe by threatening him to tell Moji that he asked him how to get the Bataung treasures. Setlabosane refuses to marry Botshe and says : "She is not of my religion. If I marry her, my people will not accept me anymore. I will not be regarded as one of them". Kgaladi realises that Setlabosane refuses his offer.

Mothobi (Chapter 4) is not happy about Setlabosane's visit to his uncle's house. Kgaladi is also a stumbling block to him. Most of the time he refuses to let him meet Botshe. Mothobi decides to see Mogaga (traditional healer) about this. He explains to him that Kgaladi is behind this. The plan to see Botshe never succeeds. Mothobi is sent away from Botshe to look after Moji's cattle at Mmebane.

One day (Chapter 5) Moji visits a hole of Madimatle (Beautiful blood) far away in the forest where he speaks with his ancestors. He goes there together with Kgaladi and his men to perform rituals to please the ancestors. The men stay far away from this hole. They are not supposed to see anything. He performs the rituals for his ancestors by making a fire. The smoke does not go into the hole. The men see everything. He instructs Mogaga (traditional healer) to give them something to make them vomit, so that they cannot remember what they have seen. The events hang together and strongly show the identity and religion of the Batswana. Ancestors can also protect their lives and their live stock.

In chapter 6, during winter time, Kgaladi sends Moji's cattle to Mmebane where there are many lions. The herd-men who accompany the cattle are under the leadership of Mothobi. Kgaladi beats Mothobi for this. That night they do not sleep because they have to fight the lions off all night. In the morning four men from Botswetla arrive. They are on their way to town to look for jobs. Mothobi escapes and accompanies them to Pretoria. That night the bull is killed and two herd boys go home to report to Kgaladi. Moji punishes them heavily for

leaving the bull to be killed. After passing the tests of jumping over the fire as a punishment for the dead cattle, fighting big animals he takes them to his place as his bodyguards.

Kgaladi blackmails Setlabosane into marrying Botshe so that Mothobi can marry Mesele. The disappearance of Mothobi upsets his plans. Kgaladi asks Setlabosane to bring Moji a pair of binoculars and promises him that he will show him the way to the cave in Modimolle.

Chapter 8 shows us that every year after the harvest Moji arranges a feast to honour their ancestors. After the feast, Kgaladi shows Setlabosane how to get inside the cave. The people of Modimolle believe that no one can go inside the cave and come out normal again. Setlabosane goes into the cave, but he is beaten by Moji's men until he does not remember what has happened.

After the killing of the bull, Mothobi goes to Pretoria looking for a job. He works on a farm. He also goes to church. He meets a Jewish man in town who wants to be rich. Mothobi tells the man about his home and the treasure that can be found in the cave at Modimolle.

The man goes to Modimolle to find the treasure. He is named Radiesele because he travels by donkey. Radiesele gives Moji a mirror and a jacket. Radiesele visits Moji every day with the aim of stealing the snake of the Bataung which is covered with gold and diamonds. The reverend and Kgaladi are not happy about Radiesele's visits, since they think that he is planning to steal the Bataung treasures.

Radiesele builds a house outside the village where he sells clothes and food. He exchanges goods for diamonds. Radiesele promises Mmabana to bring Mothobi back home. Radiesele boasts that he has something that can kill a lion. He can also take out his false teeth and return them to their place. Radiesele promises them that he will go home and bring Mothobi back home. When arriving at Pretoria, Radiesele asks Mothobi to go back with him to Modimolle because Moji promised to pay him when he brings him home. Radiesele arrives at Modimolle with Mothobi. A traditional healer is called to charm Mothobi and make him vomit because Moji believes that maybe they have bewitched him. Radiesele is paid five diamonds. At night Mothobi tells Moji how his livestock died and why he ran away from Kgaladi.

When Moji realises that Radiesele (father donkeys) cannot do miracles like he said, he instructs Kgaladi to make arrangements for a hunt in order to kill Radiesele. They go hunting at Mangana. Moji uses a short rifle which he received from the reverend. Radiesele begins shooting at elephants, but he misses. The elephants become angry and charge. He manages to escape. When Moji sees that Radiesele is in danger, he kills the elephants. Radiesele is afraid that Moji will kill him because he was unable to kill the elephants, but Moji does not and continues with the hunt.

In four days Moji and Radiesele kill many animals. Moji and his men return home. People are given meat to eat and they enjoy the chief's bravery.

In chapter 13, the climax is reached when Moji's place is demolished. One night Moji dreams about a certain man who is his father's traditional healer. He asks the man to throw bones for him. The traditional healer tells him that the heavens will attack him. He will be punished for his pride but he will not be killed. His chieftainship will be given to a rich person who does not kill people. Moji cannot believe that the heavens can destroy him and finds it difficult to believe in his dream. However, it starts raining heavily. Everything inside the cave of Modimolle is destroyed. Many people drown including Moji's traditional healer, Mogaga. Moji and Mmabana take everything they need and run away together with Moji's wives and Kgaladi. The story only teaches us about the ancestors and the strong belief of the Batswana in them. It shows that the Batswana are proud of their cultural identity. They cannot do away with ancestors.

After the floods, Moji instructs Kgaladi to throw the snake of the Bataung into the river. After throwing the snake into the water, Mogaga comes out from the water and sends a message to Moji that he must go to the east, and build his house in the mountains and that the ancestors will protect him. He must stop killing people by fire. One who kills a person is an animal and the ancestors hate him. Moji then goes to the mountains.

These events hang together and strongly bring out the belief in ancestors and also in traditional healers. The snake is to guard Moji and his village. When the land is demolished, they take it that the work of the snake is finished and return it to the water where it belongs.

4.3.4. THE ROLE OF ANCESTORS IN THE CONFLICT AND THE PLOT

Bekerson and Ganz (1990:205) say: “often, though by no means invariably, two characters in conflict provide the motivating force that drives a plot to its climax and ultimately to its resolution”. The cruelty of Moji motivates him to act foolishly against his tribe. He thinks of himself only. He is acting like God to his tribe. His actions lead to the climax of the plot where Moji pays or is punished by the ancestors by taking everything from him.

In Bogosi kupe, Serokolo acts foolishly against the chieftainship. In the end he is punished for trying to take it and he dies.

The Batswana have great respect for their ancestors and are afraid of them. Moji Motlhabi (one who eats and kills) in Moji Motlhabi feels that if they can settle at Modimolle (God has eaten) his ancestors will protect him. He says :

“Badimo ba rona ba teng fa, mme re tlile go simega
banna ba ga Mmanthatise gompieno”.

(Our ancestors are here, and we are going to defeat
Mmanthatise’s men today.) p.3

It is just their belief that their ancestors are there. How can their ancestors be there, because they have just arrived there. The creation of the mountain, the cave inside makes them believe it is the place of the ancestors. Ancestors like places like caves, and the hole of Modimolle. These places are associated with ancestors.

After many years in Modimolle, a white man comes to Moji’s village. Because they are afraid that their ancestors would be angry, they give him a place outside the village. They believe that is the way in which he talks with his ancestors.

“Monna yo o ka re o bua le badimo, tlang tiro
e ya gagwe o e dira ka malatsi otlhe”.

(It appears this man speaks to the ancestors,
why is he doing this every day?) p.9

The Bataung shows lack of experience about the missionaries. They do not understand why he is reading the Bible everyday. The difference is that he is applying his culture or religion just like them, they believe in ancestors and they practise this to the fullest. They think the man is speaking to his ancestors.

In chapter two, where 'Moji feeds the tribe', it is the time when Ramosweu (the reverend) arrives in Moji's village. The Batswana believe that the chief must choose a wife from these women every year.

"Jalo moletlo o e ne e le lobaka lwa go leboga badimo
mme moemedi wa badimo, Moji, o ne a neelwa tshupelo
ya ngwana yo a rategang wa lapa lengwe go leboga
borraagwe mogolo Moji, ka ba nesitse pula ba ba ba
babalela dijalo gore di ungwe gantsinstsi".

(The party was held to thank the ancestors and Moji, the representative of the ancestors, was given the beloved child from a certain family to thank Moji's grandfathers that they have supplied them with food and protected their crops many times.) p.12

This indicates that the people of Modimolle believe that Moji represents their ancestors. They believe that he is the one who can talk to the ancestors and ask whatever his people need.

They say :

"Rona re thuswa ke badimo ba gabo Motlhabi.
Bana ba rona ba a gola, ga go letswalo le re fisang mo pelong".

(We are assisted by Motlhabi's ancestors.

Our children grow up, and nothing disturbs us.) p.12

This puzzles many people, but because they are afraid of Moji, no one asks about the food, milk, the corn and sour milk. The missionary is also surprised by this. He thinks that it might be true that the ancestors exist, and that they have the power to perform miracles. But deep down he believes that there is something that Moji is doing, that Moji knows where the food comes from.

According to the Batswana, ancestors are not only your dead grandparents but also your parents who are still alive. According to Hammond-Tooke (1981:93), “the anger of the ancestors is caused particularly when members of the family quarrel, and especially if a junior fails in respect towards a senior”. Respect for older people is very important. According to Batswana culture, older people are regarded as ancestors. So they need to be respected.

Moji gets punished (Chapter 13) by the ancestors. Moji misuses his power and punishes people by burning them to death. He tells Kgaladi what the traditional healer told him :

“Kgaladi nkile ka etelwa ke ngaka ya ga rre mme ya
nthaya ya re ke tla latlhegelwa ke bogosi mme ga
nkitla ke tlhola ke nna le morafe.
Nna ka nyatsa ka ke itse bogosi bo gapiwa ke batho
e seng magodimo”.

(Kgaladi, I was visited by my father’s traditional healer and he told
me that I am going to lose my chieftainship and I will never
have a tribe again. I denied this because the chieftainship
can be taken by people not the heavens.) p.122

As it turns out Moji’s village is demolished by the heavens, i.e. rain. Moji cannot believe that. According to him, the village can only be destroyed by people. The ancestors are very angry because he has killed many people and they want to show Moji that they can punish him.

One night in September, (chapter 13) the destruction starts. A light wind comes from the east and blows all night. The wind blows for three days. In the afternoon of the third day, clouds start coming in from the west. When Moji seen these clouds he says :

“Pula e tllile go seola ka pele monongwaga; mme e bile ke medupe.”
(The rain will come earlier this year, and it will be a soft rain.) p.119

On the fourth day the rain begins. The rain falls day and night. It falls very strongly for two full days. The river at Bosele is full. There is also the sound of water coming from the cave.

When Moji hears this, he tells Mmabana to take everything they are going to need and leave before the water kills them.

Moji goes out of his village and sees how his village and tribe are being destroyed. He starts to believe in his dream.

In chapter 14, Moji's village is destroyed. Heavy rains cause the destruction. Moji together with his wives and his sister runs away. The other person who survives is Kgaladi. Kgaladi is together with Moji. He is the one whom Moji has sent to throw the snake of the Bataung back into the water where it belongs.

Ancestors do not like a person who ill-treats other people. They punish you. Moji made the ancestors angry by killing and burning people. He forgot that the ancestors can punish him. It is the responsibility of the ancestors to see that their descendants are well protected.

Moji is protected by the ancestors when his village is demolished. The ancestors instruct him to go and build his village among the mountains but they warn him strongly that he must stop killing and burning people.

The same happens in Bogosi kupe. The ancestors protect the chief from being killed by Serokolo and his men. It is the Batswana culture that the chieftainship be protected by the ancestors.

In Bogosi Kupe Serokolo rises in revolt against the chief. He is angry because the chief announces in front of the tribe that there are people who hold meetings during the night. But the chief is foretelling the truth. It seems as if he is reading Serokolo's mind. The motive behind this action is only to be in power and become chief. No bad motives are attached here. He would like to take the chieftainship which does not belong to him. In this regard he plans to abduct the chief and kill him.

The conflict in Bogosi Kupe is shown when the chief explains this:

“Bakwena go puo mo motseng gore bangwe ba lekgotla, ba lala ba tshwara makgotla bosigo.”

(Bakwena, there is a rumour which says some of the men of the 'Lekgotla' are holding meetings during the night.) p.61

This is also indicated by Sergeant Botipe when he says:

“Bogosi ga se kgokelo, ga bo tlhomelwe ke mang le mang.”

(Chieftainship is not a pin, it cannot be pinned to each and everybody.) p.63

The above quotation indicates that chieftainship is not a pin that you can play with, or something that any person can take if he wants it. Every Motswana knows that chieftainship is hereditary. It cannot be exchanged. There must be someone who is relevant for that according to the Batswana culture. So, Serokolo knows very well that he is playing with something which does not belong to him.

Bogosi kupe also indicates that people still believe in their ancestors. This is seen when Obakeng is in the field looking for cattle. There is a place where there are crops.

“A potologa tlhofi ya mabele a badimo”

(He went around the crops of the ancestors) p.1

This shows that crops are set aside as an offering to the ancestors.

Chieftainship in Bogosi kupe (chapter 4) is also protected by the ancestors. The chief calls a tribal meeting because he is very concerned about what is happening in his village. He says :

“Lo tla gakologelwa gore motsing re neng re sekisa Metsing ka molato ole wa setlogolo sa gagwe, go ne ga ema monna mongwe yo ke neng ke simolola go mmona mo kgotla, a nthaya a re ke tlhokomele lešabo la Bakwena.”

(You will remember the day we handled Metsing's case of his niece, a certain man, whom I saw for the first time at the tribal meeting, stood up and said to me I must look after the Bakwena people or tribe.) p.61

The Bakwena people are surprised to hear that because they do not know what the chief is trying to accomplish. Only Serokolo knows what the chief is trying to say. He knows that he

must stop his plan before things become worse or before the secret is revealed. He asks the chief to give them time to think about it.

A certain old man refuses and asks the chief to give the details of the problem. After the chief's presentation, Sergeant Botipe stands up and explains how important chieftainship is :

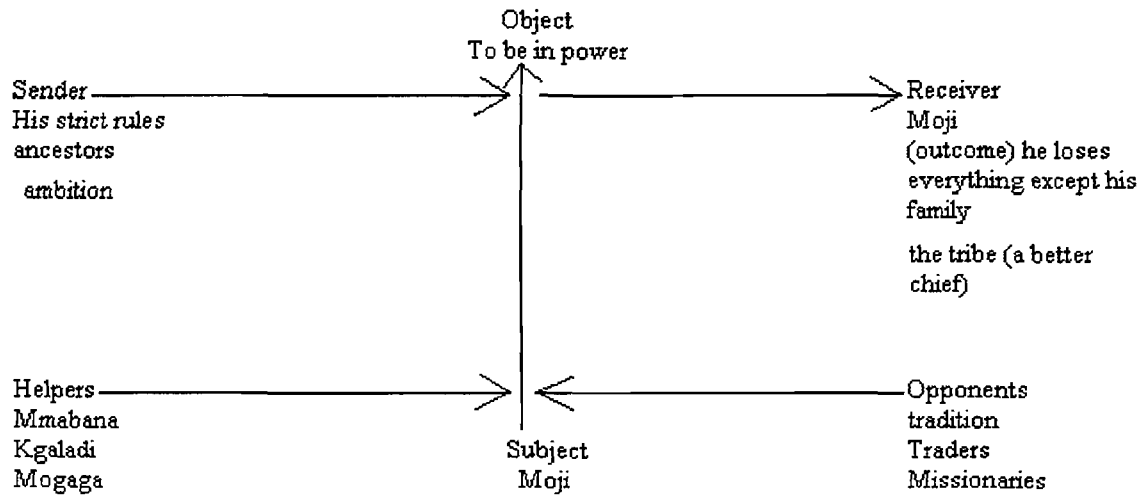
“Bogologolo tala e ne e re fa go le ntwa, kgotsa tlala,
kgotsa leuba, le fa e ka nna tlalelo efe fela, kgosi e
abele badimo kgomo ya moroba e e senang mmala
osele gope. E tla ntshiwa mo gae e lelekwa kwa nageng,
e sa disiwe ke ope fa e se beng ba yone. Ga e
gangwe ke ope, ga e ruiwe ke ope. Fa e sule
ga e jewe ke ope”.

(In the old times, during the wars, or when there was hunger, or drought, or any other problems, the chief gave the ancestors a young heifer with a plain colour. They took it to the forest, no one should look after it, No one should milk it and no one should own it. If it dies, no one should eat it.) p.62.

Moji aims at leading and protecting the Bataung tribe from the people of Mmantatise with the help of his sister Mogaga the traditional doctor and his cousin Kgaladi. Moji does not really have opponents because all the people of the tribe are afraid of him as he is very cruel and the death of a person means nothing to him. At the end he loses the tribe and nearly everything.

ACTANTIAL ANALYSIS OF MOJI MOTLHABI

Fig. 1. Diagram illustrating the reign and character of Moji



Even if Moji is very cruel, he acts like the saviour of his tribe, pretending that he is not that bad. During the drought, he feeds the tribe with milk and corn to make porridge. Every winter he goes hunting so that he can feed the tribe with meat. He performs rituals so as to ask for help from the ancestors and to show how powerful they are and how the belief is rooted in them.

Modimoeng (What is God) is the main character in Bogosi Kupe and his lover is Matlhodi (Lentils). Their son is Obakeng (Praise Him). Matlhodi is married to Oshupile according to their Batswana marriage customs. She does not love him but their custom pressurises her. Serokolo is the chief's adviser who turns against him in the end and wants to take chieftainship.

The use of the cow here is important to the Batswana. The Batswana call a cow the God with a wet nose. So, they believe it is their god, that is why they use a cow when making a special offering to the ancestors. They believe it will bring them closer to their ancestors to secure their lives even though they do not worship cows.

The offerings made to the ancestors show a link between the living people and the dead. To show that even if their grandparents are dead, they are still attached to them. That is why they believe that they are their saviours and they can protect them.

Botipe further explains that :

“Kgomo e, e tla gola e nna e le esi kwa nageng koo, e be e bolawa ke botsofe. Beng ba yona ba tla itse botoka go na le wena ka yona. Kgomo e ke yona kupe”.

(This cow will live alone in the forest until it dies of old age. Its owners will know better than you with this cow. This cow is sacred.) p.62.

People believe that if a cow is sacrificed to the ancestors, it becomes holy. They believe that the cow connects them to their ancestors. Chieftainship is like this cow. Chieftainship is sacred. No illegitimate person should take it. A chief must be born a chief. Chieftainship is hereditary. No one should interfere with chieftainship like Serokolo who wants to take it.

The quotations above indicate that the chief is the protector who supports his tribe during wars and periods of hunger. The chief can only achieve this by sacrificing to the ancestors.

In conclusion one may say that ancestors play a major role in the life of the Batswana. They believe that ancestors are their way to success. By believing in them, making special offerings, by asking for their help in everything they do, the Batswana cultural identity is emphasised.

4.3.5. CHARACTERS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The focus in this section is on characters and how they reveal their culture, personality and how they maintain or negotiate their cultural identity.

Chapter 1 of Bogosi kupe gives us a flashback to Matlhodi (Lentils) and Oshupile’s marriage 18 years before. Matlhodi never loves Oshupile until he dies. Immediately after his death, Matlhodi wants to continue with her daily work and also goes to the field to plough.

Tukisang is disappointed and tells his sister that she does not respect Oshupile while alive and now does not show the world. He is also against the Batswana cultural marriage and that a person must not choose her husband or wife.

When Matlhodi marries Oshupile, she is already pregnant with Modimoeng's baby. Modimoeng wants to marry Matlhodi but her mother refuses. Modimoeng tries to show Matlhodi's mother that 'a loving heart knows no bounds' but Matlhodi's mother chases him away. Modimoeng is very angry and goes to the forest to stay there where he meets Obakeng eighteen years later. Matlhodi hides that she still loves Modimoeng and the baby she is carrying.

4.3.5.1. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHARACTER (MOJI)

Moji (One who eats) is a chief and also a traditional healer like his sister. He works with the traditional healer of the tribe, viz. Mogaga. As his name suggests he eats everything even people by killing them, and burning them with fire. This leads us to the punishment of Moji by the ancestors because he misuses his power and eats the peoples' meat.

Moji strongly believes in ancestors. When they are defeated by the Batlokwa tribe, he arrives at the mountain called Modimolle where he asks his ancestors to give him wings to climb the mountain together with his people because he believes that their ancestors live there and will protect them. Because of the presence of their ancestors on this mountain, they believe they would defeat the Batlokwa tribe.

Moji is very cruel. When Setlabosane enters the cave, Moji beats him to death. He orders his men to tie him up so that his blood cannot flow. He covers him with the skin of a cow and throws him in Bosele where foreigners live so that people can see the danger of going inside the cave.

After Moji's bull has been killed by the lion, the herdboys who come to report it, are heavily punished. They are made to run around the ground six times, to jump six metres, and to act as if they are killing lions and they must not miss them, by walking over their bodies, fighting snakes and by jumping across the fire. One who fails to jump, will fall into the fire and it will be the end of his life. Many people are killed in this manner. No one should be shown any mercy.

Moji hates people who cry because he never cries. If someone cries, a heavy stone is tied around him and people are ordered to burn fire next to them. These people are burnt to death.

Moji orders the people of Bosele to lie on their stomachs on very hot sand so that he can walk over them. When the men of Bosele arrive at home, women and children are crying. Moji calls a tribal meeting and orders the women and children of Bosele to cry again. No one cries because they know that Moji would kill them. This indicates how cruel and vindictive Moji is. Moji wants his people to feel his presence as chief. He wants them to be afraid of him and they must know that he is the only one who is dictating rules to them.

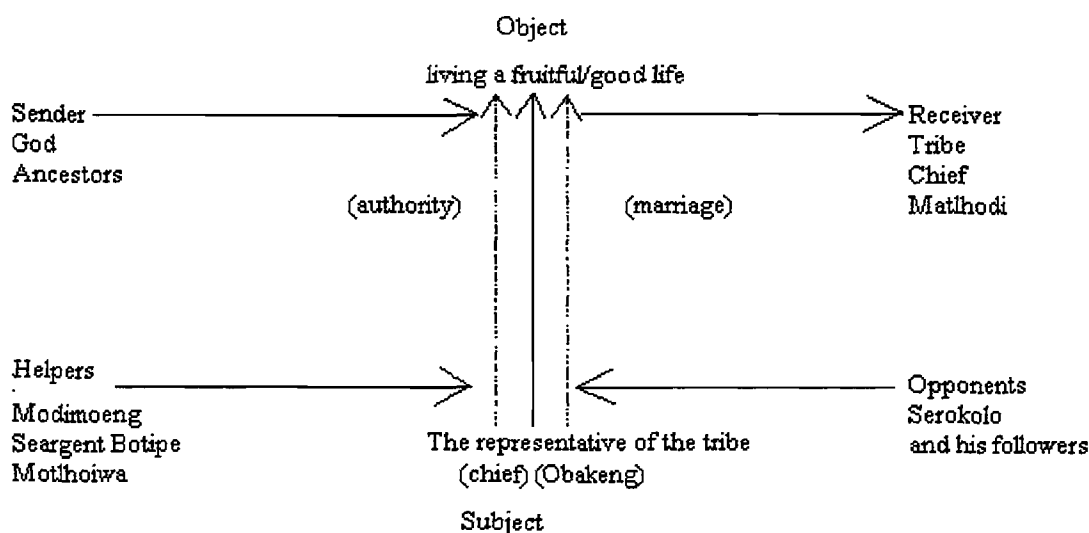
At home he shows people that he can shoot better than Radiesele. He makes people believe that he knows everything. Moji takes out some of the parts of Radiesele's rifle so that it cannot work. Moji does not want to show his weakness. He wants people to believe that he is a brave man.

One may conclude that Moji does not behave like a real Motswana chief. A chief should be loving and caring and should satisfy everyone. He must respect everyone young or old, poor or rich so that they can respect him in return. His behaviour is not acceptable as the Batswana chief.

4.3.5.2. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS IN BOGOSI KUPE

Actantial Analysis in Bogosi kupe

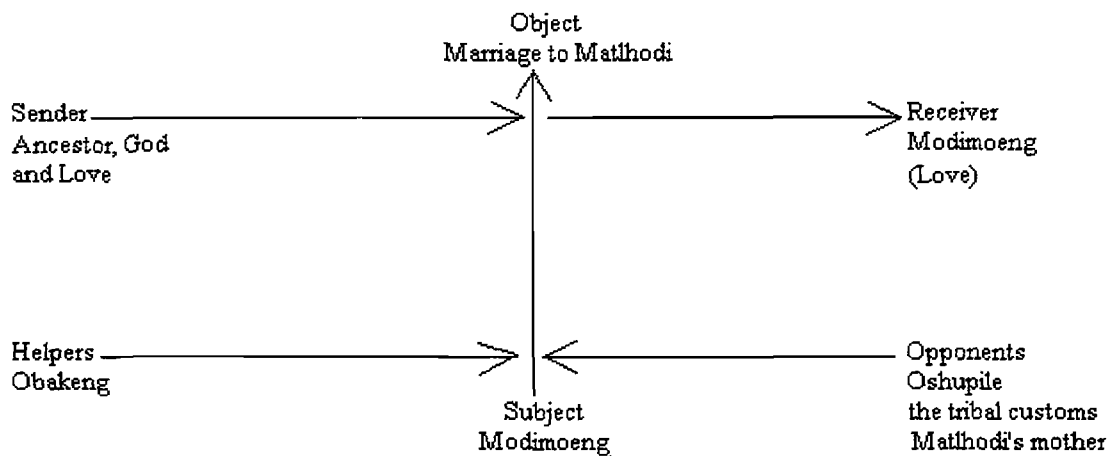
Fig. 2. Diagram illustrating ambitions in Bogosi Kupe



Here the subject is the representatives of the tribe i.e. Obakeng, Modimoeng and Motlhoiwa who wants to protect the chief and the chieftainship. According to the tribal customs he

cannot become the chief. Motlhoiwa (One who is hated) knows all Serokolo's plans and he waits for the action. The day Serokolo and his followers take the chief, Motlhoiwa, Modimoeng and the Sergeant, help the chief from being killed. The ancestors also protect him because chieftaincy is controlled and protected by ancestors. In the end the chief and the tribe benefit. Serokolo dies later in the hospital as the punishment of interfering with the ancestors.

Fig. 3. Diagram illustrating the actantial relationship in Bogosi kupe



The subject is Modimoeng who is in love with Matlhodi. He is denied the chances by Matlhodi's mother by refusing him to marry her daughter. The tribal custom also becomes a stumbling block for him and finally Matlhodi is married to Oshupile. After 20 years Oshupile dies. Obakeng decides to buy a few cattle. The stealing of the cattle reunites him with his biological father Modimoeng, which also leads to the reunion of Modimoeng and his first lover, Matlhodi.

Modimoeng (What is God) is the main character and his lover is Matlhodi (Lentils). Their son is Obakeng (Praise Him). Matlhodi is married to Oshupile according to their Batswana marriage customs. She doesn't love him but their custom pressurises her.

Modimoeng in Bogosi kupe believes that a person must be denied his/her rights. This is clear from the beginning (Chapter 1) when he wants to marry Matlhodi but Matlhodi's parents refuse. He believes that a loving heart knows no bounds.

Modimoeng is very cruel - After Obakeng tells him that Tukisang's sons one day want to kill him, he takes revenge and leaves Tukisang's sons in the cave to die.

He is sympathetic - He rescues the chief from Serokolo who wants to kill him so that he can take his chieftaincy.

He is secretive - He does not tell Obakeng that he is his biological father until the end. After that Obakeng asks his mother.

Matlhodi is very strict - She teaches Obakeng that he must never in his life cry. When Oshupile dies, Obakeng does not cry even if he wants to. He knows that his mother cannot tolerate that.

Matlhodi (Lentils) is very secretive - She stays with Obakeng for 20 years without telling her who his real biological father is. She never tells Oshupile that the child she is expecting is not his. She keeps this to herself until Oshupile dies.

She does not care for other people - Matlhodi does not love her husband Oshupile. After the death of Oshupile, she never cares what happens. She wants to go and carry on with her work as if nothing has happened.

She is a person of her word - Inside her heart she knows that she loves Modimoeng. She will wait for him no matter what happens or how many years it takes.

She is afraid to face the truth - When Obakeng asks her about Modimoeng, she wants to know why he asks her because she does not like that, you are the one who knows him. She does not tell him the truth.

She does like to hide her feelings - She never stops loving Modimoeng even if she is married to Oshupile. This is indicated when she tells Obakeng in the last chapter that :

“Ke ne nka dirang fa ke nyetswe ke rata rre Modimoeng.”

(What could I do, when I was married being in love with Mr. Modimoeng.) p.83

Obakeng - He is sympathetic and a thief - He steals the government's cattle in order to help his mother. He loves his mother and from time to time he goes home to check on his mother.

He does not tell his mother that he lives with Modimoeng in his magic forest. He never tells her what happened to Tukisang and his sons.

The fact that Obakeng steals the government's cows, is a crazy idea. He puts himself in a difficult situation, and has to hide the cattle. On the other hand, this helps him to meet his biological father. The fact that he calls himself Modimoeng at Sefatlhane (Zeerust), leaves us with an unanswerable question. He does not know that Modimoeng is his father. Obakeng has a loving heart. Even while hiding in the forest, he does not forget his mother. Time and again he goes home. This love is also expressed when he wants Modimoeng to go back to his mother so that they can build a new life again.

He likes secrets and does not want to reveal the truth. The death of his uncle's sons remains a secret. He does not want his mother to know that he is responsible for their disappearance. He does not tell his mother the truth about his whereabouts and that he is staying with his father in the forest. Bogosi kupe has secret places e.g. the cave in which the sons of Tukisang are left to die and the forest of Dimo where Modimoeng hides

Modimoeng's (what is God?) name is a sign of the presence of God. In chapter 3, he is denied the chance to marry Matlhodi and this causes him to question his character and his creator. He asks himself why God has made him different from others. He has a huge body and is hairy like a baboon. He swears that he will curse the name of God until he dies because everywhere he goes, he is rejected.

After meeting Obakeng, Modimoeng tells Obakeng that he once cursed God when he was still young but now he regrets that because God gave him the forest which is secretive and no one knows about it. Modimoeng never stops marvelling at the beauty of God's work. He asks himself who cannot appreciate nature while the whole creation is singing Hosanna at the top of its voice.

Modimoeng emphasizes the point that no one can stand against what God has made because all the creatures bow their faces in front of him. He is happy that the forest is well set to satisfy one's heart.

Another character is Motlhoiwa. He warns the chief about Serokolo's plans. Serokolo wants to kill the chief and take over the chieftainship to satisfy his ambition. Motlhoiwa helps to rescue the chief from being killed because he is not happy about what Serokolo is doing.

Sergeant Botipe warns the Bakwena tribe that chieftainship is sacred and cannot be taken by force. It belongs to the legitimate people and not everyone can get it.

Characters here give us the sense of the Batswana cultural identity of loving cattle, to stay at the cattle-post and to live in the forests. They like to plough the fields to make a living out of that.

4.3.6. SETTING AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Settings are the physical background or the element of place in literature. The settings in Bogosi kupe and Moji Motlhabi are given Setswana names, viz. Magogong, Phiritona, Sekgwa sa ga Dimo and Modimolle. The Batswana names are sometimes given because of certain incidents. Sekgwa sa ga Dimo (The giant's forest) in Bogosi kupe explains itself because the giant (Modimoeng) stayed there. No one ever knew about the forest except him. The same applies to Modimolle (God has eaten) in Moji Motlhabi, since most of the Batlokwa were killed on that mountain. Some were killed inside the cave but no one asked about that. People simply seemed to disappear.

The settings in Moji Motlhabi are closely related. Every place is connected to the ancestors as the texts mainly focus on the importance of ancestors and the role they play.

Modimolle (God has eaten) has a cave inside in which Moji believes their ancestors are. They can protect them. He hides the Bataung treasures in there, keeps their food and also his cattle there. He makes his people believe that the place is sacred and no one must go in there because it can be dangerous. Mmebane (Place of women) also indicates that Moji believes is a place where his cattle can graze because his ancestors will protect them. The same applies

to Madimatle (Good blood). He performs rituals for the ancestors there because his people believe that he can speak with the ancestors to give them rain.

Setting in Bogosi kupe is somehow connected. The events in Bogosi kupe start in Magogong and end in the magical forest. Magogong plays an important part and it relates to the bad moments experienced by Matlhodi (Lentils) marrying a man whom she does not love, and the loss of the man she loves. Phiritona is the centre of all the events where Matlhodi experience the death of her brother and his sons. The magical forest where Modimoeng stays, connects Modimoeng and his son Obakeng. The forest gives us a sense of believing that God is there. The beauty of the forest shows that God is living. The reunion of Modimoeng and Obakeng finally reunites Matlhodi and Modimoeng.

Another place is Mmehane where Moji's cattle are sent for grazing and Madimatle where there is a hole where Moji performs rituals for their ancestors to protect them and bring them rain. Monyaise and Moloto's places provide us with a cultural feeling. People feel that the places encourage them to practise their culture. In as far as places are concerned, it is the tradition of the Batswana to settle in forests and caves for the sake of security in times of war. All the places resemble the Batswana tradition and they are all Tswana names.

Sergeant Botipe also explains to the tribe that chieftainship is sacred and is protected by the ancestors. One who interferes with chieftaincy will be punished. Serokolo dies in the end because he wanted to take over the chieftainship.

The magical forest also plays an important part because it is where Modimoeng (The giant) lives, where the stolen cows are kept and where Tukisang's sons are killed. This is the place where Modimoeng rescues the chief from being killed. It is also the place where God lives or where his presence is felt.

Moji places foreigners in places such as Bosele (at the eastern side of Modimolle) so that he will not see them near his place. Placing them at a distance shows how cruel Moji is and that they are not important to him.

In chapter four, a place like Madimatle is used for performing rituals for the ancestors. Moji is supposed to go there alone and no one is supposed to see that. He believes that his ancestors are there inside the hole.

Another important place is Mmehane where Moji's cattle are kept. No one should know the place and see them when it is time for the cattle to come out of the cave. Moji believes that this can bring bad luck to cattle. The only persons who know this are Kgaladi and the herd boys who have been chosen to look after them. Mmehane is a place where Mthobi, one of the herd boys, escapes to because he is afraid of the pressure Kgaladi will place on him to marry his daughter.

The settings of both texts reveal the Batswana beliefs. They believed they should live in the mountain caves so that they could hide well during wars. There are also traditional meanings attached to certain places that are spelled out in the text, namely Modimolle, meaning God has eaten.

4.3.7. TIME

Moji Mthobi shows two periods. Historical time is indicated when the Missionary (the reverend) arrived in Modimolle. He convinced many people and got many followers. He brought civilization in Modimolle although some did not believe him. He also built the church where they prayed every day. The missionaries tried to keep the Batswana out of their culture and to receive Christianity instead. Business people like Setlabosane and Radiesele arrived at Modimolle to improve certain cultural aspects.

Traditional time is indicated by the fact that the people of Modimolle believed that the ancestors could give them food in times of drought. Moji stayed many years in Modimolle with the idea that their ancestors were there and they would protect them.

People believe in traditional healers. Mogaga (traditional healer) built the snake of the Bataung and they believed that it protected them from their enemies.

Moji made his people afraid of the cave inside the mountain of Modimolle because it is the place of their ancestors. Everyone who goes inside the cave, will become mad like Setlabosane who became mad after going inside the cave looking for the Bataung treasures.

In Bogosi kupe the author starts the text with the death of Oshupile. He gives us a flashback of what happened after 20 years i.e. the love of Modimoeng and Matlhodi and the child Matlhodi is expecting.

4.3.8. THEME AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Theme is the central meaning that the authors pass on to the readers.

In Moji Motlhabi the theme is misusing the worshipping of ancestors. The Batswana believe wholeheartedly in ancestors. They believe they can cure you when you are ill, protect you or help you. This is implicated in chapter 5 when Moji goes to Madimatle to perform the rituals so that the ancestors can bring them rain.

In chapter 13, the ancestors appear in his dreams, promising to destroy his land, and they did it because he misused his powers.

The theme in Bogosi kupe is that 'chieftainship is sacred'. The court hearing (Chapter 2) is an important event for revealing certain aspects of cultural identity. The Batswana settle their cases at the tribal office where we find the chief and his councillors. This is where Tukisang is fined a cow by the chief for not telling the truth and accusing Obakeng of fencing his yard. The value of land and the issue of fences reveal that there is no private ownership of land. No person should extend his yard without the knowledge of the chief. The chief controls everything.

The cave inside the mountain of Modimolle plays a major role. People believe that their ancestors stay there to protect them from their enemies.

4.3.9. THE ROLE OF HONOURING THE ANCESTORS AND CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THESE TEXTS

The life of the Batswana was based on the rules of a long standing tradition. They believe that culture is the starting point of life. According to Silberbauer (1975:18), “culture is the total way of life that a man learns from his parents, his community, his environment and what he is taught concerning the customs and religion of his people”. This is true of the two novels under discussion.

In chapter five, where ‘Moji sees things’ in Moji Motlhabi the Batswana culture is indicated when Moji is going to the places where he knows he will meet the ancestors. He thinks he is the only one who can speak with their ancestors to ask them for food and protection. He goes to a place where there are big stones and there is a big hole next to these stones. From inside this hole, at midday, you can hear different sounds of people, cows, chickens and other animals. He is accompanied by his men and his traditional doctor, Mogaga. When coming near the hole, these men are not allowed to come nearer because Moji believes that they would make the ancestors angry. The Batswana believe that their ancestors are found in the holes, caves and mountains. That is why they respect places like these.

The novel as a whole reveals the strong belief of the Batswana in ancestors. It shows how the Batswana respect their ancestors. The novel also reveals how Moji misused his powers as a chief by killing innocent people so that they can feel his authority.

The role of ancestors in Bogosi kupe is indicated where Serokolo wants to take chieftainship and kill the chief (Chapter 4). All Serokolo’s plans fail because chieftainship and the chief are protected by the ancestors. Chieftainship is sacred and is graced by the ancestors.

4.3.10. THE RELATION BETWEEN ANCESTORS AND THE TRIBE AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY

The relation between the ancestors and the tribe in these texts is very important. People believe that ancestors reveal themselves to you when you are sleeping and that the ancestors are always there to protect you or to warn you about something. They believe that if there is something they want to make you aware of, they will present themselves to you in a dream. According to Lye & Murray (1980:124), “people can usually identify the individuals whose

presence they experience, most commonly in a dream". The idea that "ancestors can also trouble a person by appearing in dreams" is also supported by Hammond-Tooke (1981:89).

People believe that ancestors can warn you by presenting themselves in a dream. Moji indicated his dream (Chapter 13) that his grandfather told him that his land would be destroyed by the rains or heavens because he burns people to death with fire. They believe in their culture and that the ancestors control their lives and involve them in everything they do.

To the Batswana, everything the ancestors wish to do, is right. No one should reject it because it is believed that they can harm you. They must respect the ancestors in everything they do. One day, (Chapter 5) where 'Moji sees things', Moji was at Modimolle to perform rituals for the ancestors. Moji threw Mogaga's bones and saw that they would be attacked by an animal with many legs, but Mogaga denied that.

In the same chapter, one day a locust fell on Moji's nose and he was furious because Mogaga was negative about this and said :

"O nkganeditse wa re sera se se bolelwang ke bola, fa re le kwa molapong wa dikgama, ga se na maotwana a mantsi".

(You denied and told me that the enemy the bones indicate, when we were at the Kgama river does not have many legs.) p.49

Moji instructs Mogaga to get rid of the locust. Moji here tries to show Mogaga that he also understands what the bones predict. He knows the bones better as he is also a traditional doctor.

Mogaga (Moji's traditional healer) (Chapter 5) indicates the power of the ancestors when Moji's village faces a serious problem of locusts coming to destroy their crops. He says :

"La bofelo a khutla ka mogopolo o o reng, ga se ene a pheremeditse e pheremeditse ke badimo. A itumela a bone badimo ba mo utlwile".

(He finally realised that the ancestors got rid of the locusts and not himself. He was happy when he saw that the ancestors had heard him.) p.52

The above quotation indicates that even if the traditional healer has strong medicines to perform something, they still believe that they work because of the ancestors' wish.

In Bogosi kupe, Motlhoiwa (One who is hated) who hid himself behind a tree, realised that the plan is final. He is hated by Serokolo because he learnt that Motlhoiwa knows about his plans. Serokolo has come to a conclusion that he must kill the chief so that he can take the chieftainship.

He knew that :

“gore pitsa e budule”

(the plan is finalised) p.65

Motlhoiwa reported the matter to the chief's wife. Motlhoiwa instructed the chief's wife to keep quiet about this and told her that the chief would be back by the next day. He followed Serokolo and his men to see where they were taking the chief.

In the same chapter Motlhoiwa invited Modimoeng and Obakeng to wait for the chief and Serokolo so that they could protect the chief from his murderers. Serokolo arrived in the forest of the giant. Motlhoiwa was waiting for him. When Serokolo saw Motlhoiwa, he tried to run away. Modimoeng was already behind him. Serokolo was angry because they interfered with his plan. He told Motlhoiwa :

“O itshokile gore o bo o nkete pele, e kere? Ke ntse ke robala
boroko, ke ithaya ke re o phatlogile, moloi ke wena ke go
tlhokelang tladimothwana, wa go ka swa o eme!”

(You have been patient enough until you came in front of me,
I have been sleeping well, I thought you have
cracked, you witch, I wish I could have a bolt of lightning
for you, I wish you could die while standing on your feet) p.66

The quotation above indicates that people are not always loyal to their authority or chief. They always want a way to destroy the chief. Serokolo was very disappointed and angry to see Motlhoiwa and he immediately knew that his plan was going to fail. This also indicates that if you interfere with chieftainship, the results will be painful. Serokolo who wanted to

take over the chieftaincy, died because he was not loyal to the chief and the ancestors punished him. The chief retained his position because he was the legitimate person. He was the one who should rule.

Bogosi kupe as a complex interplay of factors, deals with the interplay of the three sets of beliefs, values, symbols and practices.

In chapter 1, Matlhodi is married to Oshupile whom she has never met or seen. The Batswana believe that it is the concern of the parents to find a husband for their daughter. This is an important practice in the Batswana cultural marriage.

According to Tukisang, the unacceptable behaviour of Matlhodi that she does not care about her husband's death, shows that she did not love him. This is caused by the manner in which she was married. He says:

“Nyalo ya Setswana ke e ganela sona se. Motho o tshwanetse go ipatlela”.

(I dislike the Tswana cultural marriage for this reason. A person must make his/her own choice.) p.3

Obakeng told his mother how he stole the cattle of the government on the way from Sefatlhane (Zeerust). He told her that he called himself Modimoeng when they asked him his name.

Matlhodi (Chapter 5) is amazed that Obakeng called himself Modimoeng. This brings us to the Batswana belief that it is the mother who knows the child's father. He confronted his mother to find out who Modimoeng really is.

In the same chapter Matlhodi told Obakeng that Modimoeng is his father. This made Obakeng realise that his mother had been hiding this secret for many years. He was surprised and said to his mother :

“Ehe, ga ke ngwana wa ga Oshupile?”

(Oh, am I not Oshupile's child?) p.83

Matlhodi told Obakeng that there was nothing that she could do because she was married to Oshupile but she was in love with Modimoeng.

Obakeng realised that this was the reason why Modimoeng always persuaded him to go home to check with his mother. The reunion of Modimoeng and Obakeng brought Matlhodi's husband back. In the end the novel indicates how traditional ways become a burden in people's life. Matlhodi and Modimoeng are denied the right to live together until the death of Oshupile. Obakeng lived many years without knowing his biological father.

This is what also happens in Moji Motlhabi when Kgaladi forces Mothobi (one who disappears) to marry his daughter, Mesele. Mothobi's wish is to marry the chief's daughter, but Kgaladi does everything to prevent the marriage from taking place. In chapter four, 'Kgaladi makes his plans'. He sends Mothobi far away from home to look after the chief's cattle. He wants to convince him to marry his own daughter. Mothobi does not know whom to marry but Kgaladi tells him that :

“Wa mmakatsa, ngwana motswalaka, o utlwile ka mang
gore motho yare a nyadisiwa a bolelelwe mosadi wa gagwe
pele a mmona. Rona ka segarona re rile re tsena gae
re tswa morakeng ra feta ra tewa go twe o tla robala
mo mokgorong ole mme ya re re fitlha teng ra fitlhela
go le mosadi mo teng”.

(You surprise me, my nephew
where did you get the information

that a person must meet his lover before marriage.

According to our culture, when we arrive at home, we were told to sleep in that
hut and found a woman inside.) p.39

According to the Batswana culture, it is the responsibility of the parents to choose a wife for their son. Mothobi accepted Kgaladi's offer against his will and to avoid this, Mothobi left Moji's cattle and went to Pretoria to look for a job. This cultural practice is also found in Pelo e ja serati where Dithole is forced to marry his cousin Mosidi because it is their custom. Unfortunately he refuses, but in Dintshontsho tsa lorato it is different. They believe that 'a loving heart knows no bounds'.

In Bogosi kupe, Matlhodi is in the end reunited with the man she loves, Modimoeng. Obakeng meets the giant in the forest and the giant immediately realises that Obakeng is his son. Modimoeng and Obakeng's reunion leaves Obakeng with many questions.

The Batswana rules about marriage were very strict. No character ever questioned this. They accepted this because they did not want to go against their culture. One may say that this type of marriage denied the lovers a chance to express their feelings. They did not learn to know each other well before marriage.

The plot of Bogosi kupe ends on a positive note where the chief gives Obakeng fifty cattle to pay for the government's cattle that he had stolen.

At Mmehane (Chapter 6), Moji's cattle are killed by the lions. One may say the incident was also a sign that the ancestors were not happy about Moji's deeds. This can also be regarded as a punishment for him. Mothobi left the herd boys because he did not want to marry Kgaladi's daughter and he was also afraid of Moji's punishment for the killing of the cattle. He escaped to Pretoria

Even if a person can go away for a long time, deep down his/her heart he/she feels that he/she must go back home. Mothobi also returns home even though Radiesele forced him to come. He brings Moji many things and his mother Mmabana also receives gifts - maybe so that they would not say anything about his disappearance.

In conclusion one may say that the discussion of both texts shows how the Batswana respected their ancestors, chieftainship and how the cultural marriage played a role in the life of the Batswana. They settle at Modimolle because they believe that their ancestors are there to protect them.

Concerning cultural marriage in both texts, it is clear that the Batswana in the past condoned the marriage to a cousin. Your cousin according to the Batswana culture is your wife. Parents are the ones who must see to it that the girl is married by the man of their choice. No woman must be left unmarried. But this rule did not apply to Matlhodi. She was forced to marry

Oshupile who is not her cousin. Matlhodi wanted to marry Modimoeng because a loving heart knows no bounds. She wanted to go against the Batswana culture.

Honouring the ancestors illustrates how the Batswana constructed their cultural identity. To the Batswana, ancestors play a big part in their lives and they cannot do away with them, especially the older people.

Both texts stage problems of the culture of the Batswana, the ancestors, their powers and misuse or manipulation of the belief in ancestors by some people in authority like Moji Motlhabi. Problems of authority - legitimacy occur, i.e. Serokolo who wants to take chieftainship. The chief should be respected and have the well-being of the tribe at heart. He must not oppress people like Moji did. Another problem is the marriage rules and modern views about love. Marriage rules of the Batswana is that a man marries his cousin. Mothobi should marry his cousin Botshe. Matlhodi on the other hand is forced to marry Oshupile. But there are also indications of modern views as suggested by Modimoeng that a loving heart knows no bounds. First encounters with missionaries, businessmen, traders, also posed a problem to people whose culture was rooted in tribal customs. They were just like a hard nut to crack because this was not part of their beliefs. Moji Motlhabi indicates the situation where the Batswana find it necessary for the man to marry his cousin. This is indicated by Mothobi when he tells Kgaladi that he wants to marry one of Moji's daughters because they are his wives according to their culture. He says :

“Ke bontsalake, jalo ke basadi ba me tota”.

(They are my cousins, so, they are my real wives.) p.40

Moji Motlhabi also indicates the belief in traditional healers. Moji has a traditional healer, Mogaga, who is always by his side to protect him. Moji indicates that the snake of the Bataung is built by Mogaga and when his village is destroyed by rain, he throws the snake back into the river where it belongs. The snake is regarded as a false god of the village.

The Batswana believe that no one should interfere with the chieftainship. In Bogosi kupe, we find that Serokolo holds meetings during the night planning to take over the chieftainship. He is not the rightful person. Chieftainship is sacred. The ambition of Serokolo makes the ancestors angry and they counteract his plan to kill the chief by sending Motlhoiwa,

Modimoeng and Obakeng to protect the chief. They threw Serokolo into the cave. When he came out he was very sick and died in the hospital. Serokolo also places their tradition at stake because chieftaincy is hereditary. He makes people lose respect for their chief and his chieftaincy. People realise that chieftaincy can be acquired by force which is not the Batswana culture. He forgets that chieftainship cannot be smeared; is not exchangeable, and you cannot borrow it. It is sacred and highly respected. The illegitimate person, Serokolo, dies and the legitimate chief is left to rule.

Moji Motlhabi also illustrates this when Rradiesele (Father donkeys) (Chapter 10) tells Kgaladi that he has the qualities of a chief. He says :

“Wena kgomo, o tshwanelwa ke fa o ka bo o le kgosi. Seemo sa gago ke sa kgosi”.

(You, cow, the position of a chief suits you. Your height is the one of a chief.) p.98

The above quotation shows irony. Rradiesele wants to praise Kgaladi and calls him a cow, but he does not fall for the idea. He knows that if Moji gets to know that Rradiesele wishes Kgaladi to become a chief, he can be in danger because Moji is very cruel. They are afraid of him.

4.3.11. THE ANCESTORS AND CHIEFTAINSHIP

Bogosi Kupe represents two periods, the traditional attitude and modern attitudes. In the traditional period people were very afraid of their chief and respected him whatever he said. A regiment was assigned the duty of searching for the men who were sent to retrieve one of Tukisang's (burn it) cows. The death of Tukisang is a big problem. Modimoeng and Obakeng leave Tukisang in the cave till he dies. They are also afraid that it is the time for choosing wives and this incident may place them in a dangerous position where they would be seen as cowards.

Moji Motlhabi, and Bogosi kupe are both set in traditional periods when people still strongly believed in ancestors. The Batswana believe that the legitimate chief, to progress well, must be graced by the ancestors.

Botipe adds that:

“Kgomo e, ke yone kupe. Le bogosi bo ntse jalo.
 O se leke go bo tlola, ga se letsoku. Bo na le beng bagaetsho.
 Ga se mongwe le mongwe a tshwanetseng go bo gapa.”
 (This bull, it is ‘Kupe’. Chieftainship is also like that.
 Don’t smear it, its not a red ochre. It belongs to its owner.
 No one can take that.) p.62

The above quotation indicates that not every person can be a chief. This cow is sacred and it belongs to the rightful chief according to Tswana culture. By the red ochre the author tries to show that not anyone can take the chieftainship just like you smear yourself with red ochre. This cannot be changed. It will be against the will of the ancestors.

Modern attitudes are here also represented by Modimoeng who wants to marry Matlhodi. He says to Matlhodi’s mother that:

“Ka re ka pelo e ja serati, mma, Sebatlelwa ga e se je.
 Ka re bolela gore o mpolaela kae.”
 (I say a loving heart knows no bounds. He doesn’t like the
 wife chosen for him.
 Tell me how much I can pay.) p.32

Because of his undying love for Matlhodi, the rejection by Matlhodi’s mother does not change his mind. He waits until he meets Matlhodi again. On the other hand one may say Modimoeng feels very bitter because he is denied the chance of marrying the woman he loves. He decides not to marry until he gets what he wants. He and Matlhodi do not like the idea of the Batswana tradition of choosing a wife for a husband. They believe that marriage is a gift from God. One must marry the person you love. But the Batswana culture never allows that.

The reunion of Matlhodi and Modimoeng introduces some modern ideas when Matlhodi suggests:

“Go ka nna jang fa e ka re kgosi e sa ntse e
 itumetse ra kopa tetelelo ya go tsamaisa mekoro mo

bodibeng go tloga gaufe le dikgaga go
fitlha kwa re tswang go boa teng? Re ka aga
matlwana ka kwa, a thaka e tshesane e ka
tlholang e ikhutsitse mo go one motshegare,
ya re maitisiboa ba boela gae.”

(How about asking the chief while he is happy,
permission to sail our boats in the river from
the cave up to where we come from? We can
build houses on that side, where younger
people can relax during the day and come
back home in the afternoon.) p.92

In general, the role of the ancestors in both texts is very important. It brings out clearly the sense of belief in our culture which forms part of the Batswana cultural identity.

4.3.12. THE PORTRAYAL OF MARRIAGE RULES

The events in Bogosi kupe indicate the customs and traditions of the Bakwena tribe at Phiritona. Matlhodi's parents still practise the custom of choosing for their child. In this regard Matlhodi says :

“Ka bona go tsogile semphete ke go fete.

A ise a ke a bone, Oshupile le fa e le ka leitlho, a sa itse kwa a yang.”

(I saw people very busy. She never saw Oshupile with her own eyes,
she didn't know where he was going.) p.4

The same practice is found in Moji motlhabi. Mothobi (one who escapes) is forced by Kgaladi to marry his daughter, Mesele, because he also thinks that she is Mothobi's cousin. Mothobi refuses to marry her because he wants to marry his real cousin, Botshe, Moji's daughter. She is the daughter of his real uncle, therefore, she is his wife according to their culture. He says : “Fa ke ne ke re ba ntshwanetse, ke ne ke sa reye basetsana ba motse otlhe, ke ne ke raya bana tota ba ga Moji. Ke bo ntsalake, ka jalo ke basadi ba me tota.”

(When I said they suit me, I was not referring to all the girls in the village, I was referring to the children of Moji, they are my cousins, therefore, they are my real wives.)

In Moji Motlhabi, marriage customs are represented by Mothobi. He refuses to marry Mesele and tells Kgaladi that a loving heart knows no bounds. He places an object over Botshe as a ring of engagement (*go tlhoma letlhokwa*) and promises that he will marry her. She is also his real cousin. He loves her and he cannot marry Mesele. Mothobi in the end, does not manage to marry his cousin. Kgaladi ruins everything for him.

4.3.13. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion one may say the belief in both texts in the ancestors is genuine. These examples quite clearly prove that the ancestors influence the plot radically. People believe that chieftainship is sacred and is controlled by ancestors. They believe that ancestors give them a true picture of the Batswana cultural identity. They regard ancestors as their gods. The novels portray culture and a certain cultural identity. The texts do, however, also show a new perspective on chiefs and ancestors.

Concerning the marriage of Matlhodi by Oshupile and the marriage of Mothobi in Moji Motlhabi, the texts still indicate the Batswana cultural marriage which is important for the Batswana cultural identity. But in Bogosi kupe, there is an indication of a different perspective on marriage when Modimoeng tells Matlhodi's mother that he wants to marry Matlhodi and that a loving heart knows no bounds. This implies that the Batswana culture is slowly changing because of the Christian influence.

The same picture of cultural marriage prevails in Pelo e ja serati where Dithole is forced by his parents to marry his cousin Mosidi. He must obey the rules of their culture. The same thing is again found in Bogosi kupe where Matlhodi is married to a man whom she has never met. The parents take the initiative and look for a husband for her. Mothobi in Moji Motlhabi shows that he strongly supports his culture. He intends to marry his cousin Botshe as he has already indicated by hanging a garland round her neck. His dream is destroyed by Kgaladi because he wants him to marry his daughter.

Despite the cultural marriage the Batswana believed in, there are some indications of the Western influences. In Pelo e ja serati, Dithole tries to show his parents that he is not willing to marry his cousin as they wish, but he wants to marry a woman of his choice. He indicates

that a loving heart knows no bounds. This saying also prevails in Bogosi kupe by Modimoeng.

Concerning the chieftainship, Maragana, Magagana and Bogosi kupe stage the same problems of chieftaincy. People fight for the chieftainship which does not belong to them. They want to satisfy their personal ambitions.

The events of the above texts give us the same picture concerning chieftainship and marriage.

The next section deals with witchcraft and traditional healing and how these affect characters and their reactions.

4.4. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND WITCHCRAFT AND TRADITIONAL HEALING : PELO E NTSHO AND GA KE MOSIMANYANA

4.4.1. INTRODUCTION

Both Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana deal with witchcraft and traditional healers. The influence of witchcraft on characters and plot, the traits of the main characters will be analysed. How the beliefs in natural and supernatural forces are portrayed in these texts and the role of witchcraft and traditional healing in the construction of cultural identity in these texts will be discussed. The Batswana believe strongly in witchcraft, but people are very hesitant to talk about witchcraft or sorcery. They are afraid that they would get into trouble. In this regard Van der Wateren & Immelmann (1988:154) say : “Towenaars is gevreesde persone wat sodra die bedrywighede aan die lig kom gewoonlik dadelik gedood is”. Fortunately the two texts deal quite explicitly with witchcraft and traditional healing.

According to Hammond-Tooke (1981:97), “witchcraft” implies the use of the witch herself, or a familiar, as an agent of destruction and “sorcery”, the use of medicines. It is believed that witches possess familiars which they use to cause misfortune to innocent people. They can put their victims into a deep sleep so that they can be sent wandering about in the night or they may cut off portions of the body of their victims or insert millet and sand into the body to cause intense pain and so on.

Hammond-Tooke (1981:102) stresses that “witchcraft is a negative attitude of jealousy and competition”. This is clearly indicated in Pelo e ntsho where we find that Nthite and other witches are jealous of Neo. They argue that she is beautiful and proud and thinks that she is going to be married to the chief’s son. That is why they decide to kill her, so that she can forfeit all the beautiful things that would come her way.

According to Sebald (1978:4), “witchcraft has been viewed as an alternative search for knowledge and the pursuit of power over life’s adversities; however, on numerous occasions it has also been cast in the deadly role of crime or mental illness”. Witches are fond of exercising power over innocent people to hurt them. Van der Wateren & Immelmann (1988:154) stress the point that witches are “dié persone wat die buitengewone invloede tot hulle eie voordeel, en tot nadeel van die gemeenskap, aanwend”.

Pelo e ntsho was published in 1979 and Ga ke mosimanyana in 1984. Both texts were written by J.M. Ntsime. He was born in 1930 in Ramatshaba near Saulspoort.

Both the texts Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana are set in rural places like Majwanatsiri where people still believe in their culture. People are still practising witchcraft and traditional healers are still regarded as very important people in their lives.

4.4.2. SUMMARY OF PELO E NTSHO

Pelo e ntsho concerns itself with sorcery and how it affects people’s lives. The play starts in the exposition act 1, scene 1, by presenting Keikepetse (I have dug it for myself), the son of the witch Nthite, in a monologue in which he indicates that he loves Tsholofelo (Hope). His main disappointment, however, is that the girl rejects his love.

The title Pelo e ntsho (Black heart) reveals the main theme of the play, viz. that sorcery is evil. In this play, Ntsime stages the conflict between traditional beliefs in sorcery and Christian views. Nthite (something hard) and her son Keikepetse represent tradition; Kgomotso and Morule are associated with Christianity but they do not believe in sorcery.

Keikepetse (act 2, scene 1) in the exposition wishes to marry Tsholofelo but she refuses his love because of his mother’s sorcery. Nthite expects her son to marry Tsholofelo because she

wants to teach her sorcery. She believes that Tsholofelo is not as stubborn as Kgomotso and would agree to be taught witchcraft. Traditionally witches believe that if they die, one of their children, especially their daughters, or even their daughters in law must inherit their witchcraft.

The turning point in the story occurs in act 3, scene 3 (the crisis) where Letsipa (A crook), a traditional doctor, orders Keikepetse to bring him the heart of the person whom he loves the most so that he can make a love potion. The intention is to make him kill his mother, a difficult challenge. Keikepetse tries to kill Kgomotso (Consolation), his half sister, but he fails. Keikepetse then kills Neo. Her heart is brought to Letsipa, but the love potion does not work.

After the failure of the love potion (act 4, scene 4) in the climax Keikepetse beats Letsipa very badly. Keikepetse is sentenced to death for killing Neo. The ghost of Neo demands her heart from Keikepetse. When Keikepetse is about to be thrown into the cave to die, he cuts off his mother's lips because she did not bring him up correctly or teach him good manners as a mother should. In the end Nthite arrives at Kgomotso's place and she forgives Nthite. In the denouncement (act 5, scene 1), Kgomotso and Nthite reconcile in the end. Because of her good heart and the belief of Kgomotso in God, Nthite knew that Kgomotso is the only person who can forgive her. The name Kgomotso (Comforter) indicates that she cannot have revenge on Nthite for what she has done to her. Rather, she comforts her and forgives her completely.

4.4.3. SUMMARY OF GA KE MOSIMANYANA

Ga ke mosimanyana means "I am not a little boy". The title explains the rivalry between the two parties, namely Kedigapile's family and Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe's families.

Kedigapile (I have taken them) in the exposition act 1, scene 1, fines Bantobetse (They didn't tell me) and Maitsegotlhe (One who knows all) to pay him two cows each, because their cattle destroyed all Kedigapile's crops. This claim creates a conflict between the characters.

Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe in the complication (scene 1) are very angry because of the fine against them. They swear that Kedigapile will not get away with that. It is a Batswana

tradition to ask help from a traditional healer when one is faced with problems or difficulties. Their only solution is to go to the traditional doctor, Bogara (a crook), to help them destroy Kedigapile's family by sending him snakes because he took their cattle by force. The crisis is indicated when the first attempt of the snake to kill all the family, fails. Kedigapile and his traditional doctor kill the snakes with their medicines and send another snakes back to Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe.

The second attempt also fails. The plot reaches its climax when Kedigapile and his traditional doctor leave Maitsegotlhe to die. In the denouement Kedigapile wins and this shows that he is not a little boy as the title suggests. Maitsegotlhe also deserves to die because he thought he knew better than Bantobetse. If you have made a mistake, you must admit that you are wrong or that you have made a mistake.

4.4.4. CONFLICT, EVENTS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE TWO TEXTS

Both Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana show personal and social conflict. Orr (1978:15) divides conflict into three categories, i.e. divine conflict, personal or individual conflict and social or cultural conflict. If we take Orr's idea into consideration one may notice that all these conflicts appear in these two texts. Conflict is essential for the development of any plot. According to Conradie (1987:7), "confrontation plays a major role in signifying conflict". In any play characters have different ideas and motives which in the end cause conflict. If their ambition is not satisfied this ends up bringing conflict among the characters.

The play also introduces Christianity as part of the conflict.

Here Christianity and sorcery are in strong conflict. Every party are fighting for their beliefs. Kgomotso and her brother try to show Nthite and her son that they have faith in God. On the other hand Nthite and her son believe that sorcery can help them. That is why they use it against Kgomotso and her brother. This is a real fight between tradition and Christianity.

In a play the author creates a conflict between characters which, through a number of confrontations, in the end leads to a climax. This is also the case in Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana. According to Hatlen (1975:14), "the climax is the culmination of a series of actions, the maximum disturbance of the equilibrium, the moment of the most intense strain, the crisis of maximum emotion and tension".

If we accept the above definition, the climax in Pelo e ntsho, act 4, scene 4 occurs when Keikepetse beats up Letsipa, because the potion made with Neo's heart did not work.

Keikepetse: O makgakga monnanyana ke wena!

Ke tla go bolaisa diatla gompieno!

Fa o loa o ka re loa rra!

(You are very arrogant man!

I will beat you very hard today!

If you are a witch, you can bewitch us!) p.104

Keikepetse is furious and wants to beat Letsipa for the failed potion. Even though Letsipa could bewitch him, he does not care. He wants to satisfy his ambition. The Batswana know that, if you make a person angry, he can bewitch you. The image of a healer does not bother Keikepetse. As a healer you need to cure people, not to kill them.

His ambition is also indicated at the Lekgotla when Letsipa tells the tribe that Keikepetse has killed someone in the forest and taken her heart. He says:

O bolaile mosetsana kwa nageng,

A bo a tlisa pelo ya gagwe kwa go nna.

Jaanong ka gore ga se ya motho o a mo ratang,

Dipheko ga di a dira ka tshwanelo.

(He killed a girl in the forest,

And he brought her heart to me.

Because it is not the heart of a person he loves,

The medicines have not worked correctly.) p.114

The Batswana believe that certain parts of a person can be used to make things like rain and love potions. The above quotation shows the anger of Letsipa and his desire for revenge. He testifies against Keikepetse.

Traditionally, according to the Batswana culture, killing and the disappearance of a person is not a miracle. The Batswana are used to this kind of practice. It is just that Neo was killed at

the wrong time by the wrong person. The author included this scene for the purpose of exposing Nthite as a witch and to show that the Batswana culture is sometimes evil.

The conflict between witchcraft and Christianity in Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana i.e. ‘witchcraft and traditional healing’ is genuine. I think it is genuine that people can practise witchcraft because it forms part of their culture. Even if it is a bad thing, I think it needs some respect too as one of the cultural aspects of Batswana culture. Traditional healing, on the other hand, makes sense for the Batswana to practise and many traditional medicines are beneficial to people. I think it is proper to practise this because this helps to construct the Batswana cultural identity and many traditional medicines are beneficial to people. Life without traditional healers for the Batswana would be empty. Even if very few Batswana homes do not use traditional healers, this seem to be a strong point of the Batswana culture. The belief in traditional healing is very strong because they protect their family and their livestock.

In act one, scene three in the complication personal conflict is indicated in Nthite’s speech where she reveals to other witches that she has a problem with Rakgomo’s children : they do not want her to teach them witchcraft.

Nthite : Bomma, utlwelelang!

Pelo ya me e tletse mabote ka ntlha ya bana ba.

Ke kopa gore le ba nthuse.

Ke mokgweleo o ntshulafaletsa botshelo

A kere jaanong ba ka bo ba le fa

E le bona ba tlhabeletsang dikoma.

E le bona ba tabogang le malapa.

(Ladies, listen!

My heart is broken because of these children.

I want you to help me with these children.

It is a problem, they are destroying my life

At the moment they could have been here

To sing our songs

And to run over the houses of other people.) p.15.

The above quotation indicates that Kgomotso and her brother are a problem to Nthite. They cannot change what they believe in. Nthite's ambition is pushed in the wrong direction and so causes destruction. Neo is killed because of Nthite's evil wish. This is bad of witchcraft because people do things without first considering the consequences. They just want to satisfy their personal ambition.

According to Jafta (1978:35), "conflict and plot are complementary to each other". Conflict develops the plot. Both texts also show cultural conflict. Beckerson and Ganz (1990:205) writes: "Often, though by no means invariably, two characters in conflict provide the motivating force that drives a plot to its climax and ultimately to its resolution". Conflict is a cardinal element of drama, a way of creating meaning by playing out opposing forces or motives against each other. Without conflict, drama loses its meaning. For Christianity in Pelo e ntsho to win, Kgomotso and Morule had to fight witchcraft in order to bring out the meaning and the importance of Christianity and the bad effects of witchcraft.

In Ga ke mosimanyana Molosi's motive is to see Bantobetse, Maitsegotlhe and Kedigapile fighting with traditional healers so that he can play them off against each other and make money in the process. In Pelo e ntsho, Nthite forces Keikepetse to use medicinal charms so that he can win Tsholofelo's love. She again motivates Keikepetse to go to Letsipa to find medicinal charms. She also tells Keikepetse to kill Kgomotso to get her heart but this fails and Keikepetse kills Neo. This causes conflict. The conflict in Pelo e ntsho is framed as a struggle between good and evil.

In Pelo e ntsho, Nthite and other witches want to practise witchcraft for the sake of power. They cannot do anything without it. Nthite and her friends are very bad. They do not care about other people's lives. They do not respect people's lives. But the older people and the younger people are against this. They believe that witchcraft is evil and will destroy the lives of people. They do not want their children to marry into families of witches. Keikepetse proposes to Tsholofelo but she is against his love because she thought that he is also a witch. Lesego (Lucky), Tsholofelo's friend, as a true friend, advises her not to fall in love with him because she does not like the behaviour of his family. In the complication, she tells Tsholofelo that :

Lesego : Ruri o ka ntlhabisa kgala.

Botsala jwa rona bo ka khutla
 Ga ke rate Keikepetse le e seng.
 Mekgwa ya lapa la gabo ga e pila.
 Mmaagwe ga se motho, moloi.
 (Really, you can make me feel ashamed.
 Our friendship can come to an end.
 I don't like Keikepetse at all.
 The behaviour of his family is bad.
 His mother is not a person, she is a witch.) act 2, scene 2, p.33

For her the behaviour of Keikepetse's family is not acceptable and no one can fall in love with him. She is afraid of their witchcraft. Lesego stresses this by telling Tsholofelo that :

Lesego : A mme ke selo sa go ratana le wena?
 (Do you think he is a thing that can fall in love with you?) p.33

Tsholofelo also indicated how bad Keikepetse's love is. She is disgusted and frustrated about what Keikepetse has told Tsholofelo and she answers him by saying :

Tsholofelo : Boboko jwa me le bona ba tshogela mafoko kgatlhanong,
 Ka e le dilabe tse di tla leswafatsang maikutlo a me,
 Ka utlwa maikutlo a me a leleka a gagwe,
 Ka utlwa pelo ya me e kukega e kokomoga,
 Ka utlwa mafatlha a me a hupela
 Mowa wa pitlagana khemo ya dirwa ka thata.
 Ka mo rotolela matlho a mafatshwana,
 Ka re ga ke go rate, Keikepetse.
 (My brain is against his words,
 Because they are enemies that will make my feelings dirty,
 I felt my feelings destroying his feelings,
 I felt my pulse going high and raising,
 I felt my chest getting asthmatic,
 My breath was blocked and breathing became difficult,
 I looked at him with big black eyes,
 I said I don't love you, Keikepetse.) p.34

The above quotation indicates that Tsholofelo strongly hates Keikepetse. She cannot stand the love of a bad person. She does not want to hurt her feelings. He is a dirty person because he is a witch. She is strongly affected by Keikepetse's love.

The bad personality of Keikepetse is indicated by Galeboe (It does not return) in the crisis stage (act 2, scene 2) where she warns her daughter Tsholofelo (Hope) not to fall in love with Keikepetse because he and his mother are witches.

Galeboe : Kgang ya eng?

A ga se kgang ya lorato?

Tsholofelo, o bule ditsebe tsa gago.

Ke raya gore o ntheetse sentle.

Ga ke batle go utlwa sepesepe ka ga Keikepetse.

A o a nkutlwa mosetsana ke wena?

(What topic?

Is it not the topic about love?

Tsholofelo, you must open your ears.

I want you to listen carefully.

I don't want to hear anything about Keikepetse.

Do you hear me girl?) p.36.

People regard witchcraft as evil even though it is one of the Batswana cultural practices. It is not easy for the people to refrain from it because it is rooted in their culture.

The personal conflict in Ga ke mosimanyana is brought about by Maitsegotlhe and Kedigapile. In Batswana culture, respect is essential. Young people should respect older people. According to Maitsegotlhe in the exposition, act one, scene one Kedigapile did not show respect when speaking to him. He was very disgusted and wanted to kill him.

Maitsegotlhe : O seke wa re ke makgakga!

E bile o seke wa re ke monnanyana!

Ke tla go thubaka nna, monna!

(Don't say I am arrogant!

And don't say I am a little man!

I will beat you, man!) p.5

Here the differences between Kedigapile's and Maitsegotlhe's cultural values and their ambitions make conflict inevitable. Kedigapile wants to show Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse that he is not a small boy. He takes their livestock by force. Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe plead for forgiveness but this does not help. They decide to kill him and his family to regain face. Kedigapile's aim is to get compensation by taking Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe's livestock by force. He does not want to listen to them. On the other hand Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse want to kill Kedigapile. Unfortunately Maitsegotlhe dies in the end.

According to Batswana culture, cases are presented to the tribal authority. No one should take the law into his own hands. Kedigapile does not act according to the Batswana culture. One may say he undermines his culture by undermining law and order. There is no proper respect but only hurtful pride. Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe want to present the case to the tribal authority as their culture suggests, but the evil force of Molosi persuade them to use traditional healers to settle their case.

The Batswana strongly respect their authority or chiefs. If they encounter problems, they know that the chief can help solve their problems. That is why Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse want to present their case first to the tribal authority which gives us a sense of our tradition and cultural identity.

4.4.5. THE INFLUENCE OF WITCHCRAFT ON THE CHARACTERS, THEIR TRAITS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Witchcraft has a bad influence on people. It encourages or forces people to do things that they do not intend to do.

Characters in a play partly reveal what the author wants the reader to understand through his texts. Through their dialogue one may easily understand the meaning and the conflict indicated in the story. According to Ntombela (1994:131), characterisation is important on two levels, i.e. the story and the text.

Once you believe in witchcraft, you gain confidence in everything you want to do because you feel that witches can help you. The rejection of Tsholofelo is a heavy blow to Keikepetse. Keikepetse cannot accept that she does not want his love. Because witchcraft is part of his life, he thinks that he may use it in order to win Tsholofelo's heart. Keikepetse's desires go against what is right and good. He cannot differentiate between good and bad. His eyes are blinded by love and the power of medicinal charms. This is clear in act two, scene four (the complication) where Ntlolane (one who jumps) advises him to use medicinal charms :

Ntlolane : Rotola matlho o lebe matshwenyego senna

O se ka wa bonyabonya sesadi

O a itse lorato ka mere lo a dirwa.

(Open your eyes and face problems like a man.

Do not look at things like a woman.

You know that love can be made out of medicinal charms.) p.55.

The quotation above indicates that Keikepetse must show off his manhood. Ntlolane suggests that Keikepetse should act like a man and be strong. He must face his problems without hesitation. He must be brave to face Tsholofelo.

Keikepetse adds : O bua se ke ntseng ke se gopotse

Mmê ke motho yo o tlhaloganyang dilo tse.

Fela ga ke ise ke mmolelele matshwenyego a me

Fela o ntse a umaka go tlhonama ga me.

(You say what I have been thinking of

My mother understands these things.

But I have never told her my problems

But she always talks about my sadness.) p.55

Here Keikepetse reveals his inner conflict. His sufferings bring him some pain, and the only solution is to resort to witchcraft. On the other hand, his mother contribute a lot to his pain. In act three, scene one (the crisis) Nthite advises him to ask help from a traditional healer, Letsipa (A crook).

Nthite : Re tshwanetse go leka Letsipa

Monna yoo o itse tiro ya gagwe

Se hutsafale Keikepetse.
 O tsetswe ke Nthite yo o pelontsho.
 (We must try Letsipa
 That man knows his work.
 Don't become hurt Keikepetse
 You are the child of Nthite who has a black heart.) p.65.

Black heart here indicates how evil Nthite is. In the end her lips are cut off for her evil deeds. She wants to poison Tsholofelo's heart so that she can fall in love with her son.

Letsipa, as his name suggests, tricked Keikepetse into bringing him the heart of a person he loves very much. Letsipa knew that Keikepetse loved his mother. His aim was that Keikepetse should kill his mother, then one witch would be dead.

The black heart of Nthite has a strong negative connotation. She is bad like her black heart. The only thing she thinks about is to kill or cause harm to people without any feeling for them.

The struggle of Keikepetse to marry Tsholofelo, in the same act, scene four, in the climax, forced him to kill Neo. He says :

Keikepetse : Ke batla pelo ya gago e ntle
 Ka yona ke ya go nyala Tsholofelo yo montle
 (I want your beautiful heart
 With your beautiful heart I will marry Tsholofelo who is beautiful.) p.81

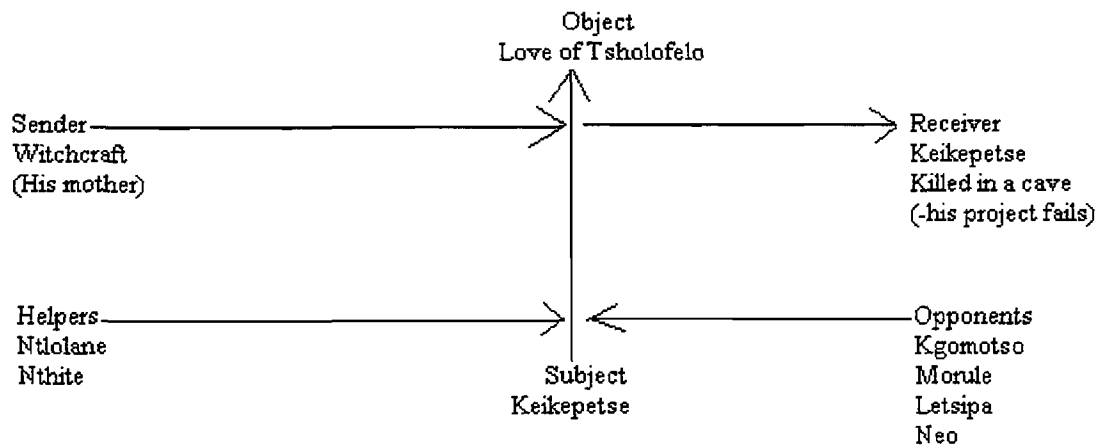
Keikepetse is controlled by witchcraft. He does not know what he is doing. He does not see anything wrong in killing a person. With the beautiful heart of Neo, Keikepetse believes he will wipe out everything bad in his way and win Tsholofelo.

In Pelo e ntsho, in the denouement (act 4, scene 3), the death of Keikepetse serves as punishment for his evil deeds of beating Letsipa and killing Neo. The chief and the tribe want to show the people that nothing can be gained from witchcraft. He suffers a lot before he dies, fighting with the ghost of Neo. Neo keeps asking him about her heart and that she wants

it back in her body. In the end Neo wants to show Keikepetse that everything has its end. It is time that he should pay for his evil deeds.

Actantial Analysis of Pelo e ntsho

Diagram 1. Diagram illustrating the love of Keikepetse for Tsholofelo



Keikepetse (I have dug it myself) wants to propose love to Tsholofelo (Hope) who refuses him. His mother, Nthite, advises him to ask the traditional doctor for a love potion. He is also helped by his friend Ntlolane. Keikepetse cannot stand the rejection by the girl and he goes to Letsipa to ask for a love potion. The love potion does not work because he has killed Neo and brought back a black or wrong heart. Letsipa gives him the wrong medicine because he wants to expose Nthite, Keikepetse and their witchcraft. Eventually Keikepetse is killed in the cave and Nthite is reconciled with Kgomotso and her brother.

In Ga ke mosimanyana (scene two, in the exposition) the sadness of Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse drives them to the traditional healer, Bogara. Cows are more important than people. They want to kill Kedigapile for taking their cattle.

Maitsegotlhe : Ga re batle gore a be a je dikgomo tsa rona.

Ene le ba lelapa la gagwe ba swe.

Kgorwana e be e tswalelwe ka mfiko

(We don't want him to take our cows

He and his family must die

His house must be closed.) p.11.

The quotation above indicates that Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse are so angry about the disrespectful behaviour of Kedigapile that they cannot distinguish between right and wrong. They just want to destroy Kedigapile's family because he has taken their livestock especially since he has a higher social status. Kedigapile is a well-known person and very rich. He is not afraid of the case because he is a friend of the whites. He is not a small boy but a big man.

Because Kedigapile also believes in medicinal charms and traditional healers, he does not waste time when Molosi tells him that Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe are coming to kill him and his family. In the crisis (scene 5) Kedigapile goes to his traditional doctor, Gadinkgake, to seek help.

Kedigapile : Rra re tla ka matshwenyego

Golo kwa gae ga re tshele sentle,

Jaanong re kopa go tlhola botshelo jwa rona.

(Sir, we have come with problems

We don't live well at home.

Now we ask you to examine our lives.) p.22

Here the same belief in traditional healers persists in Kedigapile. He believes that without Gadinkgake, Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe could kill him. Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse send a bolt of lightning to Kedigapile. This does not work and Kedigapile leaves Maitsegotlhe to die. He wants to show him that he is not a small boy. They must not undermine him. He will show them who he is. His motive is to show his status and prove his legal rights. In the end he also has little respect for human life. One may say the action of Kedigapile, Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse is wrong since it leads to a man's death.

The traits of the main characters in Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana bring about an unpleasant situation in the plot and also in the life of the people.

Kedigapile's anger creates conflict between him and Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse.

He is a well-known person. No one can challenge him or face him in court because he is a friend of the chief, the magistrate and also the whites. That they refer their case to traditional

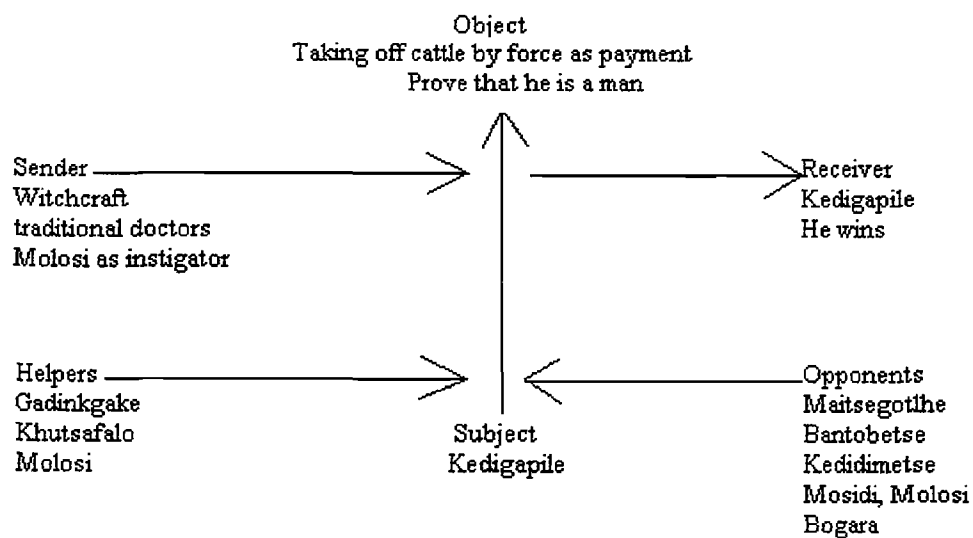
doctors, is an indication that the two parties believe strongly in their culture. Therefore they are not prepared to take their case to the court of law. They trust in their tradition.

After the incident of Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse, Kedigapile demonstrates his power by choosing himself four cows from their cattle. He does not show any mercy. He does not want them to undermine him. They must feel his presence.

After the attempt of Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse to kill his family, Kedigapile shows them that he is not a little boy as the title suggests. He shows them how the power of traditional medicines can work. He sends the snakes back to kill them. In the second attempt, he leaves Maitsegotlhe to die to show others that they must never try to kill him.

ACTANTIAL ANALYSIS OF GA KE MOSIMANYANA

Fig.1 A diagram illustrating the actantial relations in Ga ke mosimanyana



Kedigapile (I have taken them) is the subject and he takes Bantobetse's (They kept secret for me) and Maitsegotlhe's (One who knows everything) cattle as payment because their cows have eaten his crops. He does not care what they say. Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe's anger force them to go to their traditional doctor Bogara with the help of Molosi, so that they can kill Kedigapile and his family. They send the snake to Kedigapile and his traditional doctor

sends them back to their owners to kill them. Molosi, who serves both fighting parties, advises them to go back to Kedigapile and apologise for that. They again send them a bolt of lightning but this time Kedigapile's traditional doctor leaves Maitsegotlhe to die to show that Kedigapile is not a small boy.

4.4.5.1. KEIKEPETSE'S CHARACTER

Keikepetse's mother is Nthite, the witch. Just like his mother, he believes that sorcery is a good thing. He thinks it can help him to perform miracles or to get what he wants in life. He also indicates this when Tsholofelo refuses his love.

Keikepetse does not like to be thwarted. This is demonstrated when he tries to kill Kgomotso and again when Tsholofelo curses his love. He is also disappointed when Letsipa's medicinal charms do not work according to their plan.

Keikepetse believes in sorcery, but he does not have a black heart like his mother. The killing of Neo can be regarded as a mistake. She is not supposed to die; it is just that she happens to be the first victim he meets in the forest. He does not hate Neo but the aim is to get her heart. Trying to kill Kgomotso is also an unbearable thing because he is influenced by his mother. He tries to kill Kgomotso because he is not fit to love her and because he is a witch just like his mother. Letsipa also encourages Keikepetse by pointing out that the love potion will do wonders for him.

Keikepetse does not like rejection. The rejection of all the girls in the village is a heavy blow to his ego. They do not want to be loved by a witch. He cannot accept the rejection of Tsholofelo. He is easily influenced. His mother was influenced him to believe in sorcery. He is also influenced to kill. After killing Neo, his mother and other witches praise him for his bravery.

In Pelo e ntsho the love of Keikepetse creates an unpleasant situation where the daughter of Gabankitse (they don't know me) is killed. Keikepetse's mother advises him to kill his daughter in law, Kgomotso, to take her heart, but he fails to kill her. In (the crisis) (act 3, scene 4) Keikepetse decides to go to the forest and to kill any girl he meets there.

Keikepetse : Mma, ke ya go batla pelo kwa nageng.

Mosetsana yo ke tla rakanang le ene,
 Ke tla mo lobela dintsi
 Ke tla ntsha pelo ya gagwe
 Gore Letsipa a tle a ntirele meratiso.
 (Mom, I am going to the forest to look for a heart.
 The first girl I meet,
 I will kill her
 I will take her heart
 So that Letsipa can make love potions for me.) p.79.

Keikepetse goes to the forest to look for a heart. Neo happens to be the victim. Neo asks Keikepetse about his problems not knowing that she is going to die.

Neo : Ba go ganela eng mogolole?
 Gonne ke bona o le leka ...
 (Why do they reject you my brother?
 Because you are a gentleman ...) p.81.

The play Pelo e ntsho represents two temporal orientations, viz. to the past and to the future. Keikepetse and his mother are associated with the past and Kgomotso and Morule represent modern times because Christianity goes hand in hand with civilization. Keikepetse and Nthite strongly believe in sorcery, as Nthite explains in act 3, scene 1 on p.64:

Kana o tsetswe ke kgarebe e e pelontsho.
 O tsetswe ke mosetsana wa pheta ka-pejana.
 Mosetsana yo o itseng go selasela mere e mentsho.
 (You are a child of a woman with a black heart.
 You are a child of a woman who is very quick.
 Who knows how to fetch black medicinal charms.)

The black heart in the above quotation explains the character and behaviour of a witch. Black is strongly associated with the places where Nthite and the other witches meet, places like under a tree or inside a dark cave. These places are highly suitable for sorcery.

Keikepetse also reveals his character (act 3, scene 4) when the tension of crisis rises, by saying:

Kana, mma ke antse letsele la gago.
 Mekgato e e bothole ya tlhwelefatsa botho jwa me.
 Bothole jwa pelo ya gago bo mo go nna.
 Bothole jwa pelo ya gago bo mo ditshikeng tsa me.
 Bopeloethata jwa gago bo mo go nna.
 Pelo ya gago ya boloi e mo go nna.
 (Mum, I have sucked your breast
 Your poisoned milk has made my personality dirty
 Your poisonous heart is in me
 Your poisonous heart is in my veins
 Your hard heart is in me.
 Your heart of sorcery is in me.) p.78

In the climax (act four, scene one) the body of Neo is found in the forest without her heart. Modise meets Selosekae and tells him about the dead Neo in the forest.

Modise : Rra, nna ke bone metlholo.
 Ke fitlhetse motho a bolailwe mo sekhung sele.
 Mme fa ke mmona ke morwadia Gabankitse.
 (Sir, I have seen miracles.
 I found a person killed in the forest.
 But when I look at her, it is Gabankitse's daughter.) p.83

Modise and Selosekae return home to report the death of Neo at home. Gabankitse cannot believe that his daughter is dead.

In the highest tension of the climax (act four, scene three) Keikepetse and Nthite bring the heart to Letsipa. But Letsipa immediately notices that Keikepetse has not brought the heart of the person he loves the most, i.e. his mother. He therefore does not use the heart.

In scene four, Keikepetse beats Letsipa because the love potion did not work and he does not want to refund them. He cannot refund them because it is not his fault. They brought a wrong heart.

In the end Letsipa reports his case to the tribal authority and Keikepetse is sentenced to death. They kill him by throwing him into the dark cave.

The death of Neo causes a tense situation in the village. Most of the people believe that it is because of witchcraft. The people in the village are opposed to witchcraft. The lives of people in Majwanatsiri are troubled by witchcraft. Everybody is afraid that he/she could be the next victim.

4.4.5.2. CHARACTERS IN GA KE MOSIMANYANA

In Ga ke mosimanyana, (scene two) Molosi complicates the plot by inciting both fighting parties. He is the one who advises Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe to send a mamba to kill Kedigapile and his family.

Molosi : Batlang monna a lo direle go tshwanele

Ntšwa e swe e sa le e athame.

(Go and look for a man who can help you

The dog must die with his mouth open.) p.11.

Molosi here wants to make money and remind Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse about their culture. As the Batswana, they can use their traditional healers to solve their problems and get rid of their enemy. It is their culture to use traditional healers. One may conclude that Molosi is an instigator, but on the other hand, he plays an important role. He acts according to his name. He wants to see people fighting and being unhappy. He warns both the rival parties about the danger that is coming their way.

In the same act, scene four, Molosi also goes to Kedigapile and warns him about Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe.

Molosi : Dumela rre Kedigapile.

Hoo! wena!

O a tsamaya!
 O a di tsena.
 (Greetings, Mr. Kedigapile
 Hm! You!
 You are going!
 You are going to die.) p.18

To emphasise his point adds :

Molosi : Kana fa o riana
 O a bo o re Molosi ke setsenwa.
 Mekwepa e tla lo tlhasela
 E lokobola ditlhogwana tse.
 (I know that
 You are saying Molosi is mad
 The mambas will come
 and kill you.) p.18.

The above quotations indicate that witchcraft has terrible consequences in the society and corrupts people. Witchcraft and traditional healing are also very important in the Batswana culture as they reveal their cultural traits. But the way these things are portrayed in these texts, they really are bad. Molosi also corrupts people in order to get a reward or benefit. Traditional healing in these texts has lost its meaning. It is no longer helpful to people.

Kedigapile feels that Molosi has saved his life by warning him about Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse. The payment of two cattle to Molosi comes as no surprise. He knows that he must be paid because saving someone's life is not an easy task. Molosi expresses the following wish (scene 3, the complication) :

Molosi : E kete ba ka bona ngaka tota.
 Ke batla gore di thulane sentle.
 Kgomo yona ke tla e gapa
 Le tse pedi di ntse di ntshwanetse,
 Gonne nnete yona ke e mmoleletse.
 (I wish they can get a good traditional healer

I want them to fight well
 I will have to get one cow
 Even two would be enough for me
 Because I have told him the truth.) p.21

The Batswana believe that one good hand pays the other. If somebody has done something good for you, you must pay him. That is why Molosi feels that he should be paid. Here he is frank about his motive, he is playing the parties off against each other so that he can get more cattle.

Molosi warns Kedigapile about the bolt of lightning. The death of Maitsegotlhe causes a bad situation. Kedigapile and his traditional doctor leave him to die. Kedidimetse, Bantobetse and his wife are frightened by the incident.

Bantobetse : A masetlapelo!
 Fela ke moipolai
 (Oh! what a disgrace!
 But he has killed himself.) p.36.

Molosi adds : Ee ke moipolai
 Gonne o ne a itshema mogale.
 Banna, Kedigapile ga a tlakatlakelwe
 Motho yo ga se mosimanyana.
 (Yes, he killed himself.
 Because he thought he is a brave person
 Gentlemen, Kedigapile is a powerful man
 This person is not a small boy.) p.36.

Kedigapile, as the title suggests, is not a small boy. He is a ruthless man and he makes sure that he resolves everything. Maitsegotlhe dies because he has challenged Kedigapile's feelings and his family.

Molosi enjoys every moment of the fight. He does not care about the outcome. He regards the death of Maitsegotlhe as a good punishment because he thinks he knows better than others because both sides reward him with cattle.

In conclusion one may say that people must not take advantage of others. People must also learn the importance of traditional healers and not misuse them. It is the Batswana culture and it should therefore not be destroyed. People must learn to differentiate between good and bad and stick to their decision. Even if these two aspects are somehow bad, the Batswana in the past enjoyed doing these as part of their culture. As both aspects are nowadays taking a wrong turn, I think they are not worth retaining.

Characters here are used to indicate how bad the tradition of the Batswana is, but some see it as a good time of their life especially Nthite and her friends. The author uses them to reveal themselves.

4.4.6. THEME AND CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE TWO TEXTS

The theme in Pelo e ntsho and Matlhotlhapelo is that witchcraft is evil and leads to death and traditional healing is resorting to using supernatural powers that backfire on you. To express the theme, the author uses characters and events to convey this to the readers. The texts indicate how dangerous and evil witchcraft is. Keikepetse is killed by throwing him into the cave. Merementsi(many medicines) is also dead because of witchcraft.

The theme in Pelo e ntsho reveals a person's inner evil. The play demonstrates the social and evil problems caused by witchcraft.

According to Nthite, Tsholofelo will fall in love with Keikepetse by midday. By midday she stresses that if she can use the love potion, Tsholofelo will never refuse him whether she loves him or not. She feels that the medicines will work according to their plan and Tsholofelo will love Keikepetse without objections and without wasting time.

Here Nthite (Keikepetse's mother) shows that witchcraft is in her blood. Keikepetse has not even proposed to Tsholofelo yet but Nthite already wants to use her medicinal charms to

bewitch Tsholofelo's heart. Nthite wants Tsholofelo to be her daughter in law so that she can teach her witchcraft. It would be easy to teach her when she is married to her son Keikepetse.

Nthite has an evil heart. She also wants to teach Kgomotso (Keikepetse's half sister) her witchcraft. Still in the same act and scene Nthite is angry because Kgomotso refuses, because she believes in God and regards Him as her saviour.

Nthite says : O gana ke mo ruta boloi a nja boswa

Fela ga a nkitse, o nkwela godimo

Nna pelo ya me e ntshofaditswe ke tse dintsho tsa boloi.

Ke tla mo tsenya ka lebitla le le ntsho ka dipheko.

(She refuses to let me teach her witchcraft, and inherit my witchcraft.

But she doesn't know me,

My heart is blackened by the black medicinal charms of witchcraft

I will put her in a black grave with medicinal charms.) p.5.

The quotation above indicates how anxious Nthite is to teach Kgomotso witchcraft. But the plan of putting her into a black grave, backfires on her. Her son Keikepetse, is put into a black grave but Kgomotso triumphs.

According to Hammond-Tooke (1981:100), "witches are gregarious and meet out in the bush at night to discuss their nefarious plans". This is indicated in act one, scene two in the complication where the witches Nthite (Something tough), Lefitlhile (It has come) and Lefufa (Jealousy) meet at night to plan the death of their victim.

Nthite : Thulaganyo ya rona e supa kwa gabo Neo (gift).

Tota re batla ena mosetsana yoo.

Kana bagolo ba gagwe ba ikgantsha ka ena.

Ba re bontle jwa gagwe bo a galalela.

Bo gaisa le sethunya sa dikgakologo tsa kgalalelo.

(Our plans indicate Neo's place,

We really want that girl.

Her parents are proud of her.

They say her beauty is very bright.

Her beauty is brighter than a spring flower's.) p.14.

The witches plan to kill Neo. They want her dead to destroy the joy of her parents because she is an important gift to them. They want to kill her for their evil purpose.

Here the witches indicate that they do not only want to kill Neo, they are also jealous of her beauty, her joy and that her parents are proud of her. She has good manners.

Lefufa adds : Bomma, nna ngwana yoo ga ke mo rate.

Makgakga a gagwe a mpherosa dibete

Ga ke itse gore bontlenyana joo ke eng fa pele ga me.

O itlhaotse motlhala, o tsamaya a le esi

Puo eo, nna ga ke e rate bomma

Ke utlwa lefufa le letlho di pumpunyega ditshikeng tsa pelo.

(Ladies, I myself, I don't like that child

Her arrogance makes me want to vomit.

I don't care about her beauty

She is exceptional, she walks alone

That speech, I don't like it.

I feel jealousy and hatred running through the veins of my heart.) p.14.

The above quotation indicates that jealousy and witchcraft often go hand in hand. If you are a witch, you become jealous of other people and eventually you decide to kill them. It is believed that becoming a witch starts with being jealous of other people. Nthite and her friends are jealous of Neo and want her dead, to satisfy their personal evil ambition.

Before the witches try to kill Neo, Nthite and the other witches decide to send a familiar to Kgomotso because she is stubborn and does not want to take instructions from Nthite. This is clear when Merementsi (Many medicinal charms), a traditional healer, sends Nthite's familiar to Kgomotso to poison her with its breath (act one, scene four, the exposition).

Merementsi : Tshwene, o nkutlwe ke a go roma

Ke go roma ka tse di thata tsa ga Merementsi

Mosetsana o teng ga twe Kgomotso kwa ga Nthite

O tshwanetse go fetoga setlotlwane

Robala le ena bosigo bongwe le bongwe

E re ka masa a magolo o mo tlogele
 Fa o robotse le ena o mo khuele mowa.
 O mo khuele mowa wa dipheko tse dintsho
 (Baboon, listen to me I send you
 I send you with the strong medicinal charms of Merementsi
 There is a girl at Nthite's place, they call her Kgomotso
 She must become a resurrected corpse
 Sleep with her every night.
 Leave her in the morning at dawn.
 While sleeping with her, breathe out in her your breath
 The breath of black medicinal charms.) p.22.

The baboon goes to Kgomotso but it fails because she wakes up. The baboon does not sleep with Kgomotso. When Nthite comes home, she finds it outside her house. Nthite uses this baboon as her evil familiar. The evil baboon indicates how Nthite and her friends are evil and want to face Kgomotso and Morule to be involved in their evil practices of witchcraft.

In act two, scene one Keikepetse proposes to Tsholofelo and she rejects him by saying :

Lorato!
 Kampo wa reng Keikepetse?
 Lorato!
 (Love!
 Or what do you say, Keikepetse?
 Love!) p.29

Tsholofelo adds that :

Keikepetse o kgopisa pelo ya me!
 O sulafatsa mowa wa me!
 Fa o batla gore re utlwane,
 O se tlhole o bua lefoko leo
 Gonne nna tota, ga ke go rate!
 (Keikepetse, you are making my heart angry!
 You hurt my feelings!

If you want me to agree with you,
 You must never say that word
 Because I myself, I don't love you!) p.29

Tsholofelo is very hurt about Keikepetse's words and tells him that she does not love him. She leaves him and goes home.

Lefitlhile (one of the witches) in (act 3, scene 1) is very sick and tells other witches that witchcraft does not pay :

Lefitlhile : Boloji ruri ga bo thuse sepe,
 Gonne ke fa ke swela lesidi.
 (Witchcraft does not help
 Because here I am dying for nothing.) p.57

Merementsi (their traditional healer) is also sick and wants his payment on his dying bed so that his children can get something. Nthite and the other witches refuse to pay him because they are not satisfied with the job they asked him to do. In scene two, Nthite advises her son to go to the traditional healer Letsipa because he believes she can help Keikepetse with a love potion. This shows the personal evil that traditional doctors can perform.

According to Sebald (1978:147), "witchcraft is a form of infatuation with magic". He further stresses that magic consists of the belief in supernatural forces that can be manipulated to achieve pleasure, protection, riches and revenge; conversely, it can be marshalled against pain and misfortune. In Pelo e ntsho this is indicated when Keikepetse (I have dug it myself) goes to the traditional healer, Letsipa (A crook), and asks him for a love potion to achieve his aim (act 3, scene 3, the crisis).

Keikepetse brings the heart of Neo. He does not bring his mother's heart as Letsipa expected. Keikepetse beats Letsipa because the plan does not work. Letsipa (crook) presents his case to the tribal authority. Keikepetse is sentenced to death for killing Neo and for beating Letsipa. He is killed in a cave as result of personal evil.

The theme Ga ke mosimanyana (I am not a small boy) is 'evil plans can backfire'. The main characters are fighting with traditional healers. In the exposition (act 1, scene 2) Molosi (One who makes people fight) advises Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe to consult a traditional doctor so that he can give them medicinal charms or send a familiar to kill Kedigapile and his family.

Molosi : A o raya gore o lebetse segaeno
 O ka dira gore dikgomo di folotse
 Kgotsa wa di gaila ka tladi
 Kgotsa wa gaila lelapa la gagwe ka tladi
 Kgotsa wa mo romela Motshitshi wa dinotshe
 Kgotsa wa mo romela noga ya mokwepa.
 (Do you say you have forgotten your roots
 You can make his stock infertile
 Or you can strike them with a bolt of lightning
 Or strike his family by lightning
 Or send a swarm of bees to him
 Or send him a mamba.) p.11.

Molosi plays an important part in spying in order to put the fighting parties in action. Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse are very angry about the decision taken by Kedigapile. They go to consult the traditional healer, Bogara (something tricky).

Maitsegotlhe : Monna o re gapetse dikgomo ka dikgoka
 Gonne a itse gore kwa tshekong o tla re phala
 Jaanong le rona re batla go mo utlwiswa botlhoko.
 Tota fa a ka swa re ka itumela.
 (The man has taken our cattle by force
 Because he knows that in court he will defeat us
 Now we also want to hurt him
 If he could die, we will be happy.) p.15.

Kedigapile also goes to see his traditional doctor because Molosi warns him that Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe are going to kill him and his family by sending them a mamba. According to Hammond-Tooke (1981:101), "strong protective medicines can be used to send the

familiar back to its owner, when it is said, the frustrated animal might turn on the witch and kill her". In this regard, Gadinkgake (Kedigapile's traditional healer) has sent back the familiar of Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe to kill them. In the crisis (act 1, scene 4) Gadinkgake uses his medicines to destroy the snake. He says :

Gadinkgake : Ka moleko o montsho o,
 Ke batla gore o boele kwa o tswang teng.
 Ka o moshibidu o, o fete o gaile,
 Ga ke loe ke busetsa teng.
 Boela kwa o tswang teng.
 O fete o dire se ba neng ba go laetse,
 gore o se dire kwano.
 (With this black medicine,
 I want you to go back where you come from
 With this red one, you must kill,
 I don't bewitch anyone, I just send them back.
 Go back where you come from.
 You must do what they told you to do here.) p.27.

The quotation above indicates that evil plans can backfire on the people who make them. Kedigapile's traditional doctor sends back the snake to Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse to kill them.

The snake here is a symbol of something very evil. Like Hofstede (1991:7) indicates, "objects carry a particular meaning which is only recognised by those who share the culture". The snake shows how evil Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse really are. They want to kill Kedigapile and his family. Like the snake, they do not care about other people's lives.

The snake returns to its owners to kill them. Molosi has always told Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse that, when the snake comes back, they must go back to Kedigapile and ask him to forgive them. After this incident, Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe go back to their traditional doctor and complain that he has not helped them. They decide on the second plan to kill Kedigapile with a bolt of lightning. Bogara prepares a bolt of lightning by using a dead bird.

Bogara : Nonyana e tala sefofa lefaufang,

Tsoga borokong go dira tiro
 Ke batla go pega motho diphukeng tsa gago,
 Gore ka magagane a fatse motho tlhogo.
 Nonyane e tala ya dipheko tse dikgolo,
 Phuphutha re go bone,
 O etse jaaka o fofa le tladi marung.
 (Green bird which flies in the sky
 Wake up and do your work!
 I want to put somebody on your wings
 And with this battle axe he must cut off a person's head.
 Green bird of the great traditional medicines.
 Fly let us see you.
 And make like you fly with the lightning in the sky.) p.34.

At this point, Maitsegotlhe is left to die by the traditional doctor of Kedigapile. His charms are stronger than Bogara's medicine. Kedigapile and his traditional healer want to show Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse that he is not a small boy as the title suggests.

This play is a true reflection of the Batswana practices in the past where people still believe in the power of traditional healers to protect them, to inflict harm on their enemies or help them with their problems. It also presents fighting with magic as childish and laughable. Witchcraft also plays a role in their lives. They believe that when a person gives you problems, you can ask a traditional healer to get rid of him.

In concluding this section, one may say that witchcraft and traditional healing are long existing issues within the Batswana culture. In the past these things were freely practised and regarded as part of the Batswana cultural identity. People were free to practise this because they believed it is their culture. Even today, this is still persisting. Witches do not want people to know that they are practising witchcraft. They are afraid to be killed. Today people still take traditional healing as a very important practice in their lives. They still trust in traditional healers. But the future of witchcraft is in danger. People do not regard it as being as important as in the past. To them it is a disgusting thing to involve yourself in. Society does not benefit from it and regards it as a futile exercise.

One of the traditions of the Batswana is sorcery. They want to keep it that way and want to maintain and pass on the tradition. The above quotation gives an impression of what the Batswana are capable of. The dirty personality gives us a strong image of how bad Keikepetse is and also how bad sorcery is. He has no mercy in his heart because it has been poisoned by his mother.

Ntsime also indicates modern times (p.8) by presenting Kgomotso and his brother in contrast with the witches. They totally believe in God and that he will save them, and Kgomotso says:

Kgomotso: Mme Motshedisi o re ratile tumelo ya nnete

Ke sa ntse ke gopola sentle

Fa a re Modimo o tshiamo e bile Modimo o boitshepo.

(My mother Motshedisi taught us the true faith

I still remember well

When she said God is good and God is faithful.) p.8

In Ga ke mosimanyana, on the other hand, the conflict is acted out when Kedigapile acts violently and in his anger he takes cows from Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe without their permission.

Kedigapile: Mosimane, gapa feresi ele

O be o gape ele le ele le ele

(Boy, take that heifer

And take that one and that one and that one.) p.6

Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse feel that Kedigapile has gone too far. They do not condone what Kedigapile has done and express their anger by saying:

Maitsegotlhe : Rra, ga o a tshwanela go itlhophela,

Tota o a re fosetsa.

(Sir, you don't have the right to choose

You are making a big mistake.) p.6

The author here stresses the point that if you think you are brave and wise, you always put yourself in danger. Besides being brave, Maitsegotlhe wishes to make other people feel bad

or to punish them. Therefore if you wish misfortune on other people, you will in turn land in trouble. That is why in the end Maitsegotlhe and Keikepetse die. Even the Batswana believe that if you wish to prosper in life, you must never ill-treat other people, otherwise they will bring you bad luck.

Kedigapile seems to have no mercy. He reveals his true colours by saying:

Kedigapile: Ke a itlhophela rra,
 Gonne le dikgomo tsa lona
 Di itlhopetse tshimo ya me.
 (I am making my own choice, sir
 Because even your own cattle
 Have chosen my land.) p.6

4.4.7. THE PORTRAYAL OF THE BELIEFS IN NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL FORCES IN THE TEXTS

The beliefs in natural and supernatural force in Pelo e ntsho and Matlhotlhapelo are very strong, especially since witchcraft and traditional healing are used where people still find it right to practise what they believe in.

In Pelo e ntsho the relation to supernatural forces is strong. The characters believe that the supernatural forces are there to help them and also to carry out the evil things they want to do. This belief in the supernatural is clear from Nthite's speech to her son Keikepetse (act one, scene one). She says :

Nthite : A o a rata kgotsa ga o rate
 Ke tla mmatlela e mehibidu, meratiso
 Tota ke rata mosetsana yoo
 Fa e le ngwetsi ya me,
 Re tla tlola dikgorwana bosigo mmogo
 Ke tla mo ntshofatsa pelo ke e thatafatsa
 Gore a se boife le lentsho la bosigo.
 (Whether she likes it or not
 I will get red medicines, love potions for her.
 I really love that girl

If she can be my daughter in law
 We will jump fences together during the night
 I will make her heart black and strong
 So that she would not be afraid of the darkness during the night.) p.6.

Nthite, as a mother should help her son by using witchcraft. She thinks that if her son can marry Tsholofelo, she will teach her about witchcraft. Tsholofelo will inherit her witchcraft. She will jump over the houses and cause harm to people. This is also indicated when the other witches want to kill Tsholofelo. In act 1, scene 3, (the complication) Nthite instructs the witches not to kill Tsholofelo.

Nthite : Nyaa mma

Jaanong foo o nkama pelo
 Yoo ga a tshwarwe.
 Yoo ga a dirwe sepe
 Keikepetse o batla go mo tsaya.
 Ngwetsi ya me e tla tsena thupo ya bosigo.
 Ke a itse o tla nkutlwa.
 (No, madam,
 Now you touched my heart
 That one, must not be touched
 That one, must not be harmed in any way
 Keikepetse wants to marry her.
 My daughter in law will attend the training of the night
 I know she will understand me.) p.14.

The above quotation clearly tells us that witches' decision is final. If they want you, they will never kill you. But if you are not in favour with them, they could kill you at any time that they want. For them, the life of a person means nothing.

According to Pelo e ntsho, witchcraft is not necessarily for older people alone but also for young people. Ntlolane encourages Keikepetse not to lose hope about Tsholofelo. In act two, scene four Ntlolane advises him to use love potions so that he can achieve his aim.

Ntlolane : Ka mere e mentsho o ka mo gapa.

Se diege tsala.

Loga maano.

(With black medicinal charms you can win her heart

Don't waste time my friend.

Make a plan.) p.55.

In the complication (act 3, scene 1) Merementsi (traditional healer), who co-operates with Nthite and her friends, forces himself to go into Gabankitse's house to bewitch them. The results are painful.

Merementsi : Ngwanaka, ke baloi ba motse ono

Ba ne ba nthomile gore ke bolae Neo

Kana ke raya morwadia Gabankitse

Jaanong ke fitlhetse Gabankitse a le thata.

(My child, they are the witches of this village

They send me to kill Neo

The daughter of Gabankitse

Now, I found that Gabankitse is very strong.) p.62.

According to the play, the author wanted to show that traditional healing is stronger than witchcraft. If you have a strong traditional healer, witches become unable to bewitch your family or they find it difficult to enter your home because it is strongly charmed. The conflict between Christianity and witchcraft is very important in the sense that God has the power and controls everything, even the witches. He is more powerful than the witches, with the result that Nthite and other witches were unable to bewitch Kgomotso and Morule. They believe in God and prayer.

The belief in supernatural forces can also be seen in the same act and scene where Nthite indicates that she is a witch. This is rooted in her blood and she is proud of that. She says :

Nthite : Kana o tsetswe ke kgarebe e e pelontsho.

O tsetswe ke mosetsana wa pheta-ka-pejana.

Mosetsana o o itseng go selasela mere e mentsho.

(You are born from a girl who has a black heart.

You are born from a girl who is very quick.

A girl who knows how to get black medicinal charms.) p.64.

Here the words black heart show a negative picture of witchcraft. A black heart never thinks of something very good.

There are those in Pelo e ntsho who believe strongly in the natural forces and they find it hard to practise witchcraft. They see it as an evil practice that harms people and brings them misfortune. Kgomotso and her brother decide to stick to their God and not to witchcraft. They accept God because he can save them from their enemies, i.e. Nthite and her son. In the end they forgive Nthite because they believe that it is not right to take revenge. God will punish them.

Kgomotso : Iketle Segale.

Re ka se buse bosula ka bosula.

Ga se thuto ya Sekeresete eo.

Mme Nthite o tla atholwa ke

Modimo wa gagwe.

E seng nna le wena.

(Wait Segale

We cannot return evil by evil

That is not Christian teaching

Mom Nthite will be punished by her God.

Not me and you.) p.129

The quotation indicates what happened in the end. Keikepetse wants to behave like Christians as Kgomotso and Morule are doing. He believes that they are leading a better life. This is also indicated by Nthite in the end after Keikepetse publicly ill-treats her. She goes to stay with Kgomotso so that their God can forgive her. Kgomotso does not want to revenge because she believes that it is not the Christian way (p.129). She believes God will punish her himself.

Kgomotso and her brother believe in prayer. The problem between them and Nthite is resolved by going to stay with their uncle. Before the death of Neo, Nthite sends Morule to

his uncle to tell him that she wants to make some rituals for Kgomotso and Morule's father at his home. Keikepetse tries to kill Kgomotso but he fails.

In the exposition (act 1, scene 2) Tsholofelo also remembers her mother's words before she died that they must believe in God and praise Him. She said :

Thapelo ke thebe ya mokeresete.
 Banaka lo ikanye Modimo o o le tlhodileng.
 Lo ikanye lefoko la Modimo, lobone la mokeresete.
 (A prayer is the weapon of a Christian.
 My children, trust God who created you.
 Trust the word of God, the light of a Christian.) p.8.

Witchcraft in Pelo e ntsho causes a conflict between Kgomotso and her brother and Nthite and her son Keikepetse. Nthite and her son represent evil, and Kgomotso and her brother represent Christianity. Nthite hates Kgomotso and her brother because they do not want to be involved in witchcraft. They believe in God and trust that He will save them from the evil spirits of Nthite. In the end Nthite and Keikepetse realise that Kgomotso and her brother lead a rightful life. Their God protects them and they have good manners. Keikepetse wishes that her mother had taught him good manners just like Kgomotso's mother had done. He ends up cutting off his mother's lips as a punishment for not guiding him well. He tells her that she is a bad mother.

The belief in supernatural forces is also clear from Nthite's speech when she talks about Kgomotso and Morule. In the complication (act 1, scene 3) Nthite asks witches to help her because she is tired of them. They refuse to become witches. She says :

Nthite : Bomma, utlwelelang!
 Pelo ya me e tletse mabote ka ntlha ya bana ba.
 Ke kopa gore lo ba nthuse.
 Ke mokgweleo o ntshulafaletsa botshelo.
 (Ladies, listen here!
 My heart is full of anger because of these children.
 I am asking for your help with them.
 They are a problem that breaks my heart.) p.15

In the same act and same scene Nthite adds :

Nthite : Bana bao ba kgwetswe ke makgowa mathe ganong.
 Fa ba gopotse kereke eo,
 O ka se tlhole o ba dira sepe.
 Ba gopola gore kereke ke tshireletso ya bona.
 Ba gopola gore thapelo e tla dibela botshelo jwa bona.
 (Those children are poisoned by the whites
 When they remember that church
 You will never change them
 They think that the church is their security.
 They think that a prayer will protect their lives.) p.15.

The above quotation indicates that in the play the belief in God and natural forces is stronger than the belief in supernatural forces. This also indicates the conflict between Christianity and witchcraft. Morule and Kgomotso believe strongly that nothing can happen to them if they believe in God. They can overcome their problems by asking help from God. Nthite still stresses the point that Kgomotso and Morule only trust in God. They do not believe in traditional cultural practices and this complicates the plot (act one, scene three) and Nthite states that :

Nthite : Bana bao ba ikantse thapelo thata.
 Gongwe ke yona pheko ya bona.
 Ba gana ditlhare tsa Setswana.
 Ba re bona ngaka ya bona ke Jesu
 Motho yoo nna ga ke mo itse.
 (Those children believe strongly in a prayer.
 Maybe it is their medicine.
 They refuse to take the Setswana medicinal charms.
 They say their doctor is Jesus.
 I don't know that person.) p. 16.

The image of medicine in the above quotation indicates that even if witches are against Christianity, they believe that prayer can be used as a medicine which is as important to the

Christians as witchcraft is for witches. According to the Christians a prayer serves as a weapon which protects their lives.

Kgomotso and her brother believe strongly that the power of God is stronger than the power of witchcraft. This is clear when Nthite and other witches send the baboon to sleep with Kgomotso. Kgomotso never sleeps because she feels that something evil is outside. She asks her brother to pray so that God can protect them.

Morule : Mogolole a re rapele:

“Modimo re lopa tshireletso ya gago.

Re babalele mo direng tsotlhe tsa rona.

Re boloke mo go yo o bosula.

Wena Jesu ngaka ya dingaka re phekole.

Amen.”

(My sister, let us pray.

God, we ask you for your protection.

Protect us from all our enemies.

Protect us from the one who is evil

You, Jesus, the doctor of doctors, heal us

Amen.) p.23.

Healing in this quotation indicates that God can heal better than traditional doctors. He controls everything even traditional healers. Without God’s power, traditional healers cannot perform well.

They believe that God is there to protect them from their enemies, people who want to harm them. God is the only one who can heal them. This is indicated in Kgomotso’s prayer :

Kgomotso : Modimo re golole mo thateng ya satane.

Modimo re golole mo thateng ya lefifi.

Dira tsa rona ke tse di šenne meno

Re sireletse Morena wa rona

Re bee ka fa tlase ga diphuka tsa gago.

Amen.

(God free us from the power of Satan.

God free us from the power of darkness
 Our enemies are here waiting for us
 Protect us our God
 Put us under your wings
 Amen.) p.25

The above quotation indicates a sense of two powers clashing in conflict. Kgomotso and her brother lives are in danger of losing their lives. They pray to God to protect them and put them under his wings.

Letsipa presents his case against Keikepetse to the tribal authority and Keikepetse is charged with murder. He is thrown into the cave where all witches are killed. Before he is thrown into the cave, he asks to be given permission to kiss his mother goodbye. When Nthite kisses him, he cuts off her lips and tells her that he is doing this because he believes her lips did not teach him good manners. He wants to be a Christian like Kgomotso and Morule, but his mother did not teach him that. Instead she taught him to be a good witch. From that day on, Nthite got rid of witchcraft. She told herself she must leave this thing because it does not pay. She goes back to Kgomotso and Morule and tell them that she is no longer practising witchcraft. It is useless and evil. Kgomotso forgives her for everything she has done to them and accepts her back into her house. This implies that one must never return evil by evil. This is not the Christian way.

In the end we may conclude that witchcraft instils bad superstitions in people. Witchcraft as one aspect of the Batswana culture that has lost direction should be stopped or changed. People live in fear that they can be killed. According to witches life is not so important and people can die without a valid reason. Today witchcraft is gradually disappearing. Christianity is overpowering witchcraft. People have abandoned this aspect of Tswana cultural identity by putting their trust in God and by belonging to different churches.

The people in the village are also not happy about the bad things that are happening to their people. Keikepetse proposes love to Tsholofelo but he is rejected because she does not love him and the problem is witchcraft. No one in the village is interested in Nthite's family. This is also clear from Lesego's reaction when she learns that Keikepetse has proposed to

Tsholofelo. In act two, scene two in the complication Lesego (Lucky) is very furious because she knows his family. She warns Tsholofelo that :

Lesego : Ruri o ka ntlhabisa kgala.

Botsala jwa rona bo ka khutla.

Ga ke rate Keikepetse le eseng.

Mekgwa ya lapa la gabo ga e pila.

Mmaagwe ga se motho, moloji.

(Really, you can make me feel ashamed of you.

Our friendship can come to an end.

I really don't like Keikepetse.

Their family manners are bad.

His mother is not a person, but a witch.) p.33.

This indicates that even if witchcraft is part of the Batswana cultural practices, the feeling of most people in the village is that they dislike it. They regard it as planting evil spirits in people and making them believe that witchcraft is not a bad thing, and that it is just the meeting of people during the night so that they can practise their songs. In the same act, scene four in the highest stage of the complication, Lesego still stresses the point that to use love potions to win someone's love, is a sign of witchcraft. She says to Tsholofelo :

Lesego : Kana selo seo ke boloi.

Go tsenya kgotlhang fa gare ga batho ke boloi.

Ga ke itse gore a meratiso e tla dira mo go Tsholofelo.

(You know that thing is sorcery

To put conflict between people is sorcery.

I don't think love potions will work on Tsholofelo.) p.52.

Being a traditional healer does not mean that a person is automatically a witch, but witches can force you to bewitch people. Witches believe that when they die, their children must inherit their witchcraft. On his death bed Merementsi (traditional healer), one of Nthite's witches, calls his son and tries to convince him to take up sorcery (act three, scene one) in the crisis but his son Baile (they are gone), refuses and he is very unhappy with his father's words. He is furious with him.

Baile : Ga ke batle boswa jwa boloi.

Rra, o moloi yo o pelontsho.
 O swa loso le le go tshwanetseng.
 (I don't want the inheritance of sorcery.
 Father, you are a witch with a black heart.
 Your death is right for you.) p.63.

Here is an indication that some of the younger people do not approve of witchcraft. They are not interested in it. It is just a waste of time and causes only misfortune to innocent people. They do not see any reason for inheriting bad things from their parents.

In the denouement (act 5, scene 4) it is clear from Kgomotso's speech that Christians should not take revenge. This is not the Christian way. Kgomotso and her brother lead a difficult life at Nthite's house, but when Nthite is in trouble, Kgomotso forgives her.

Kgomotso : Iketle Segale.

Re ka se buse bosula ka bosula.
 Ga se thuto ya Sekeresete eo.
 Mme Nthite o tla atlholwa ke Modimo wa gagwe.
 (Wait, Segale,
 We cannot avenge ourselves.
 This is not the Christian way
 Nthite will be judged by his God.) p.129.

The above quotation indicates the Christian love that Kgomotso and Morule have. They give Nthite the love she needs. They believed that only God can be the judge.

In Ga ke mosimanyana the belief in supernatural forces in the exposition in scene 2 is very strong. This is clear from Mosidi's speech when Molosi advises them to look for a traditional doctor. She also believes that their traditional healer can help them to kill Kedigapile.

Mosidi : Ntlhang, o tla ka mafoko Molosi

Bantobetse batlang monna a le thuse Kedigapile,
 Ka dipheko a mmolaele ruri.
 (It seems, you are coming with the right idea, Molosi
 Bantobetse, go and look for a man to help you with Kedigapile

With medicinal charms, he must kill him.) p.11.

She also stresses the point that their traditional doctor, Bogara, knows how to deal with this kind of problem.

Mosidi : Kana Bogara o itse dilo tsa gagwe.

Ka tsona Kedigapile o tla tsena ka lebitla.

(Bogara knows his things

With them, Kedigapile will enter the grave.) p.12.

On the other hand, Molosi is happy to see things happening. He wants to see them fighting by using their traditional doctors. His motive is to get brave men fighting. He indicates this in his monologue, in the crisis, when coming from Kedigale.

Molosi : E kete ba ka bona ngaka tota.

Ke batla gore di tle di thulane sentle.

Dingaka di tla letsa dinaka fa go senyegile.

Mekwapa e tla emelana e lomana.

(I wish they can get a real doctor.

I want their traditional healers to fight.

Traditional healers will blow their horns if things do not go well.

Black mambas will bite each other.) p.21.

The motive behind this is that Molosi wants to see who is the bravest man between Kedigapile, Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse. He wants to see them fighting and how strong their traditional healers are (p.21). Molosi wants to satisfy his ambition and wants a reward for helping Kedigapile. He does not care about the lives of Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse.

This indicates that Molosi believes in traditional doctors and is interested in them. He likes to see people in trouble. Kedigapile fights back with his traditional healer. Gadinkgake (scene five in the crisis) advises Kedigapile that to make his family very strong so that Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe cannot kill him and his family.

Gadinkgake : Fa re sa ingate rra,

O tla swa le lapa lotlhe la gago.

Tota ke tshwanetse go tsamaya le lona.

Re tshwanetse go lala re thaile lelapa.
 (If we don't prepare ourselves,
 You and your family will all die.
 I must go with you.
 We must make your family strong tonight.) p.23

Gadinkgake causes Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe to go crazy. They do not know what to do and realise that Kedigapile is not a small boy like they thought.

The Batswana generally believe strongly in traditional healers. Kedigapile, after being informed about Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse's decision, finds it necessary to see his traditional doctor so that he can strengthen his family and protect them against his enemies. Kedigapile says to his wife :

Kedigapile : Mma a re tloge jaanong
 Re tshwanetse go ya go bona ngaka ya rona
 E bo e lale e tlile go thaya lapa le.
 (Mom, let us go now
 We must go and see our traditional doctor
 And he must come and strengthen our family tonight.) p.21

The above quotation indicates that Kedigapile knows that people can sometimes be cruel. So he does not want to waste time with such a problem. He must act immediately. He goes to his traditional doctor to strengthen his family with his medicinal charms.

Both texts indicate the Batswana culture even though they misuse it. The way traditional healers work in these plays, shows that witchcraft is not acceptable. Traditional healers work together with witches. They no longer have that respect and dignity as traditional healers. The author succeeds in showing that the Batswana do sometimes practise witchcraft to satisfy their ambition and that they strongly believe in it. Pelo e ntsho ends with a better situation, since the bad witches are converted to Christianity and in Ga ke mosimanyana only Maitsegotlhe dies.

The difference we find in these texts is that in Pelo e ntsho it is Christianity versus evil or witchcraft. The aim of Nthite is to give or teach Kgomotso and Morule witchcraft, but because their belief in God is too strong, it is not easy for Nthite. She never manages to change them. They show her that God can save and protect them from evil things and bad people. At the end, Nthite realises that she has wasted her time with witchcraft and she has gained nothing from that. It shows that witchcraft is part of the Batswana culture.

The same applies to Ga ke mosimanyana. The fighting of the main characters with traditional healers, also indicates witchcraft. All that they have in mind is evil. They want to kill each other whereas there is a solution for everything. They could have consulted the tribal authority to settle their case. Evil governed their hearts.

Witches do evil things. Even if they see that they have put their lives in danger, they want to satisfy themselves and get the work done.

Witchcraft is portrayed as dirty, black and evil. Witches are very cruel and think only of bad things. They are very stubborn and do not easily give up their dirty work.

The dirty personality of Keikepetse forces him to try to kill his half sister, Kgomotso. It also makes him kill the innocent Neo and take her heart. He beats Letsipa for not giving him the correct love potion. Keikepetse also cuts his mother's lips. By doing this, I think he wants to show people that a mother should always be exemplary. She must be able to guide, teach children good manners, how to behave and above all Christianity so that they can refrain from doing evil things.

Characters in the two texts believe in supernatural forces but some hate and fear them. Nothing can change them because they believe it is their culture. But the Christians dislike and fear these forces because they believe that such forces are harmful to people. Witches care less about other's lives.

Witchcraft and traditional healing form part of the Batswana culture. Even if it is bad, the Batswana practise these to maintain their cultural belief and identity. This gives us a true and balanced image of Batswana culture.

4.4.8. THE ROLE OF WITCHCRAFT AND TRADITIONAL HEALING IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THESE TEXTS

Witchcraft and traditional healing play a major role in Pelo e ntsho and Matlhotlhapelo - Ga ke mosimanyana. Witchcraft in Pelo e ntsho plays an important part. It is one of the cultural practices of the Batswana. The author in Pelo e ntsho indicates clearly that there are people who are against witchcraft and those who are very interested in witchcraft and who do not want to get rid of their culture. This is also indicated by Kgomotso in the exposition (act 1, scene 2) that witches are very stubborn and do not want to lose their cultural identity. She says :

Kgomotso : Ga ke itse nna.

Fela batho ba lapa le ba tlhogo di thata.

Ba ganelela mo setsong sa bona.

(I don't know my brother.

But the people of this house are very stubborn.

They refuse to abandon their culture.) p.9.

Witches are very stubborn and they do not easily give up witchcraft. They have a strong relation with supernatural forces and nature. They believe that witchcraft is part of their culture.

Witches use traditional healers to see whether the place is safe for them. According to the Batswana culture, bones are used to indicate an illness or to tell the future or to solve any problem that is coming your way. This is indicated by Merementsi when they send a baboon to go and sleep with Kgomotso so that they can change her into a tokolosi (resurrected corpse). Again they use this when they want to enter the house of Gabankitse so that they can kill their daughter, Neo. This is a clear indication that even the witches use traditional healers to protect them from any danger they might encounter.

In Ga ke mosimanyana people regard traditional healers as important people in their lives. They believe that their lives can be protected, and that healers can solve their problems. This is revealed where Kedigapile and Bantobetse fight using their traditional healers. The aim of both fighting parties is to kill each other. Kedigapile goes to see his traditional doctor to

protect him against Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe because he wants to show them that he is not a small boy. The Batswana culture of traditional healing is at stake even though the whole thing is childish. The use of traditional healers seems to be like a childish game where people want to show that they are strong or have strong traditional healers. They play with their lives and want to kill each other. Kedigapile, in scene five, in the complication indicates that he can also kill Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse.

In the past, the life of a Motswana sometimes depended on traditional healers in whatever they did. Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe also consult their traditional healer because it is their culture that if a person troubles you, the only solution is the traditional healer. Both fighting parties, by using traditional healers, reveal one of the Batswana cultural practices.

The author in these two texts also maintained the Batswana custom that disputes are sent to the tribal office to be settled. In Ga ke mosimanyana, after Kedigapile had charged Bantobetse and Maitsegotlhe, they thought that they had to go to the tribal office so that the chief and his counsellors could help them.

Maitsegotlhe : Nna ke batla gore re atlholwe ke lekgotla.

(I want our case to be judged by the tribal court.) p.5

The above quotation indicates legal redress versus traditional healing. Even though Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse use traditional healers, they believe that their case should be legal and the authority should intervene.

This is also indicated in Pelo e ntsho when Letsipa reports to the tribal authority that he was beaten by Keikepetse because his medicinal charms did not work.

Letsipa : Rra, ke teketelwa gore ga ke a ntsha dipheko tota.

Ga twe dipheko tsa me ga di a dira sepe.

Ka ga moo ba batla tuelo ya bona.

(Sir, they have beaten me because I didn't give them the real medicines.

They say my medicines have done nothing.

That is why they want their payment back.) p.109

The author here wants to show people that culture is what builds a man. Whatever people do or think, they must not forget their roots. Witchcraft can be bad in other people's eyes, but we must accept witchcraft even though it is evil. Ntsime shows us the evil and childishness of witchcraft. Even though many people can refrain from this, still some will continue to practise this so that the Batswana culture would not totally disappear.

4.4.9. CONCLUSION

In concluding this chapter, one may stress the point that the four aspects show up in the conflict, the results of the plot, the naming of the characters and their traits. The conflict in these texts shows how people act against their culture and how their behaviour change concerning the marriage aspect. The texts also indicate the conflict between traditional and modern ways of life, and the problem of living with foreigners. Chieftainship in these texts show a conflict between legitimacy and power.

The results of the plot in these texts are different. Concerning marriage Pelo e ja serati ends up with marriage and Dintshontsho tsa lorato as a tragedy where all the main characters die. Concerning chieftainship, Maragana indicates that the illegitimate chief survives whereas in Magagana, all the main characters die and the tribe is left without a chief. In Moji Motlhabi, the village is destroyed by rain and Bogosi kupe indicates that Serokolo who interferes with chieftainship which is instituted by the ancestors, dies. In Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana, it is indicated that witchcraft does not pay and witches end up dead, for example Keikepetse and Maitsegotlhe.

The texts also raise different questions like legitimacy and succession, living with foreigners, and the existence of ancestors. They also question the traditional way of life and the practice of witchcraft and traditional healing.

In some respects the texts give a different picture of traditional customs. Concerning marriage, it is strange to find out that the lobola that Schapera and the spokespeople talk about is not mentioned. The texts hardly represent a real cultural marriage of the Batswana at all. A normal traditional marriage includes the transferring of lobola and ends up with a marriage ceremony. But Ntsime and Raditladi overlook the fact that a complete cultural

marriage is accompanied by lobola. In these texts, no lobola has been transferred. The texts seem to lose the idea of what the Tswana custom is like.

The type of marriage found in Pelo e ja serati, Bogosi kupe and Moji Motlhabi maintains the cultural identity of the Batswana that it is proper for a man to marry his cousin and the choice is made by the parents. But these rules are no longer adhered to. Nowadays people are questioning and testing aspects of culture. For the Batswana, this type of marriage was very important. It maintained their cultural identity. According to their type of marriage, no woman was left unmarried. Nowadays, this type of marriage is no longer practised. They find it difficult to live or love a person you have never met. People think this marriage cannot last, because for the marriage to be successful, before the couple decide to tie a knot, they must first know each other very well. They must understand each other's weaknesses.

Another important aspect is the ancestors, but it is very strange to find out that, even if most people or human beings confirm the existence of ancestors, one cannot exactly tell where to find them or know where they are kept. I believe that the belief in ancestors that it is the grandparents is very strong and can never be removed from our minds.

The texts under consideration, viz. Moji Motlhabi, Pelo e ja serati and Bogosi kupe, illustrate clearly how ancestors work. People believe that ancestors reveal themselves in our dreams. But if we can think constructively, one may find out that sometimes, dreams are what we think during the day and they flash back on our minds at night while sleeping. The texts indicate that ancestors can be found inside caves and the holes. The strange thing is that people are not buried in caves. Another thing is that people believe ancestors can speak at midday, and give you food and protect you from illness. The texts forget that we are talking about the spiritual things, things that we cannot see or touch. Ancestors can also change the behaviour of people. Moji, is at the end somehow controlled by the ancestors. He involves the ancestors in everything he does.

Another strange thing Monyaise raises is the secretive forest of the giant. One can never imagine something like that happening in a normal situation. The forest reveals the uniqueness of the culture.

Chieftainship is one of the aspects that maintains the idea of the Batswana culture. Chieftainship, according to Schapera and the spokespeople, is hereditary and passes from father to son. The succession and the inauguration of the chief according to Schapera is done traditionally and this shows how cultural identity is constructed. The strange thing about chieftainship in the texts is that there is no traditional succession that Schapera speaks about. There are only fights over chieftainship and the tribe ends up not having a legitimate chief or at some stage, without a chief. Concerning chieftainship, Mosila behaves wrongly in desiring the chieftainship even though he knows he is an uncle. An uncle cannot become chief.

Witchcraft and traditional healing are very important in revealing the Batswana cultural identity but, the strange thing about this, is that it is secretive. The only people who know are those who are involved in this. They perform their duties or mission only at night so that no one can see them. This means that witchcraft is a futile exercise. The Batswana do this for the fun of enjoying to frustrate people. Even though witchcraft is practised, the youths find it evil, useless and demoralising, and it is still going on as a Batswana cultural practice. The way in which witchcraft is portrayed in these texts is true of the culture. This is only used to harm people and bring misfortune to them. I agree that witchcraft is something that can ruin people's lives. People do evil things under the shadow of culture.

Traditional healers are regarded as people who heal people and protect their livestock, but the texts indicate that traditional healers can also become witches because the influence is very strong. The strange thing about this is the idea of how these traditional healers and witches construct snakes and lightning bolts in magic which shows how cultural identity is maintained. Even though life is fast and changing, the Batswana are still using traditional healers and witchcraft. Sometimes witches force traditional healers to perform bad things and finally abuse or misuse their gift of being a traditional doctor. Characters in these texts regard it as something that makes people feel uncomfortable.

The witches in these texts adopt the bad behaviour of killing innocent people like Neo. They differ from other people because the only thing that they can think of, is killing people and causing them misfortune.

Concerning these four aspects, the texts indicate some anomalies and deviations. The marriage aspect in these texts show irregular behaviour in the main characters. Even if the main characters want change and show up that a loving heart knows no bounds, Dithole acts against the culture that says a man's wife is his cousin. He shows unacceptable behaviour to his parents by going against his culture. He does not want to bring out the idea of their cultural identity. He deviates from the whole group and culture that a chief's son must marry a Motswana woman.

One may say the texts reveal the Batswana cultural identity even if some of the ideas in these texts are against Schapera's view of Batswana culture.

One may conclude by saying it is accurate and adequate of the portrayal of witchcraft and traditional healing yet highly critical and negative. The texts have revealed how negative witchcraft and traditional healing are and how the Batswana practised this to construct their cultural identity. For Christianity, I think it is genuine that Christianity wins because it teaches good behaviour, respect and people are always protected from bad people.

I think all the Batswana cultural aspects are still distinctive today but not at the same level as in the past. The Setswana language is still given high respect by the Batswana. Performing rituals for ancestors and respecting authority are still going on today although this is done by elderly people. Only witchcraft is not practised so much but maybe it is just that people keep it secret.

The next chapter focuses on the conclusions made from all the chapters, the findings and recommendations for further improvement in the future.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

It can be said that the texts studied in this thesis do not only reflect four important aspects of Batswana cultural practices, but also reveals the total feeling about culture and how people react to these practices and learn how to deal with them.

The aim of this study was to investigate how Batswana cultural identity is constructed in the selected Setswana literary texts, to indicate how cultural identity is maintained, negotiated or transmitted by these texts and to determine whether these texts can open up new possibilities of being Tswana.

The central argument of this study was that cultural identity is constructed and reflected in the texts under consideration and that new ways to reshape Batswana cultural identity are suggested and opened.

The study has shown that traditional culture plays an important part in the life of the Batswana. Even though most of the people are no longer interested in culture, the belief in culture still persists among the Batswana, at least as far as we can judge from these texts and from the interviews.

5.1. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND MARRIAGE CUSTOMS

The texts, secondary literature and the interviews under consideration show a strong conflict between traditional and modern marriage customs. According to Batswana traditional marriage, a transfer of cattle as lobola must take place and a man should preferably marry his cousin. The texts suggested this but the younger people were against this traditional marriage. They believe that a loving heart knows no bounds.

The other stumbling block is the issue of foreigners. A Motswana man cannot marry a foreigner, it is not according to the Batswana culture. Concerning marriage customs, the texts make the point very clear that the Batswana do not want to mix their culture with other cultures.

Dintshontsho tsa lorato also indicates a typical aspect of the Batswana culture. Mmamotia as a Motswana is not allowed to fall in love with Sakoma as he is a foreigner. The tradition of the Bangwato is a threat to Sakoma's relationship to Mmamotia. Mmamotia's parents will not allow her to marry him. The introduction of Ponalo onto the scene is a bad idea. She confronts Mmamotia and suggests that she leaves her husband alone. She finally meets her death which creates a problem to the main characters. With the death of Ponalo, one may say that the author wants to indicate that sometimes love can be dangerous and sometimes sweet. The love of Sakoma, Mmamotia, Ponalo and Kalafi is not as sweet as love could be. Sometimes many lovers can be dangerous and affect your life. The manner in which Mmamotia leaves Sakoma is not acceptable. All of a sudden Mmamotia tells Sakoma that she is no longer interested in him. What makes her change? What is wrong with the love of Sakoma? Does she leave him because he loves Ponalo or is it because of their tradition? The author leaves the reader in suspense. I think the answer to these questions is that Mmamotia leaves Sakoma because she does not want to go against her culture. Yes, one may also say that the love of Sakoma for Ponalo is also a threat to her. She felt insecure. Sometimes people have to understand that love can come to an end without any particular reason. You just feel that you are no longer interested and it ends there, and nothing can change that. People must learn to accept things as they are.

The flight of Mmamotia and Kalafi to Mokwena shows the weakness of the author. He makes the reader believe that Mmamotia is a coward who cannot face her problems even though she does not kill Ponalo. Another weakness is to kill all the main characters and this makes Sakoma fail to face the case of the murder he committed. Killing all the main characters does not solve anything or does not show that for the author the problem is not solvable, but it does show the tragic effects that the marriage could have. In the end Sakoma still gets his just reward. He is punished by death. The author also punishes innocent victims i.e. Kalafi and Mmamotia. They also die. Both the texts indicate that no one can stop people from falling in love irrespective of the problems they encounter. Marriage will always be there because this is an important aspect which the Batswana belief should be graced by the ancestors.

Pelo e ja serati indicates a clash between traditional and modern marriage customs that seems to be a problem to our hero, Dithole. The texts indicate clearly that Dithole wants to

act true to traditional customs. On the other hand one may say that Dithole, in loving Nombini, wishes to change the idea of their culture and bring change to the whole tribe. Unfortunately Dithole's idea of change causes a cultural conflict among the tribe. As the future chief, he must obey the tradition and marry his cousin. It is the Batswana tradition that your cousin is your wife.

The struggle of Dithole to marry Nombini is resolved through the intervention of the ancestors. They allow Dithole to marry Nombini. The sudden change of the tribe and Dithole's parents is also amazing. With Matwetwe and the dream of Batshipile the author wants to stress the power of the ancestors. About the issue of Dithole and Nombini, one may ask what difference it makes for a Motswana to marry a foreigner? Are foreigners not human beings like the Batswana who need to be loved? Is it fair for the parents to choose a wife for their son and if not, why not? The ending of the play sanctions modern marriage choice. I personally believe that it is wrong to choose partners for your children. One may conclude that the Batswana were very strict when exercising their culture on Dithole. With Dithole and Nombini's sufferings, the author wants to convince the reader that foreigners are also human beings who must act, suffer and have emotions like anyone else in real life. Ntsime achieves his goal of bringing the distinctiveness of the Batswana culture to the reader in a convincing manner.

For this section one may point out that the Batswana maintained their cultural identity by paying lobola. No marriage was regarded complete without the transfer of lobola. But both texts, Pelo e ja serati and Dintshontsho tsa lorato make no mention of anything about paying lobola. We only hear about Sakoma claiming Mmamotia as his wife and on the other hand, Dithole marries Nombini at the end of the play, but no lobola has been paid. The texts do not really bring out a balanced view of the Batswana cultural marriage.

5.2 CULTURAL IDENTITY AND CHIEFTAINSHIP

This study indicates that literary form of art gives a true and valid image of the Batswana culture in the same way as it can be found anywhere. The texts under consideration indicate that legitimacy is played out differently in these texts. In general the investigation reveals that the Batswana respect their authority and that chieftainship is honoured. According to the

Batswana culture, a chief must be born a chief. Chieftainship is hereditary. The chief succeeds automatically to his office by right of birth.

Maragana indicates a bad situation where Lerothodi and Mosila fight for chieftainship. The author here wants to show that the legitimate chief can also forfeit his position, and that chieftainship can be obtained by force. This is also indicated in Magagana. The legitimate chief, Molaodi, is denied the right to rule and must fight for his rights. Moilantwa also claims that chieftainship belongs to him, forgetting that he is the son of a concubine and according to the Batswana culture he cannot rule or become a chief.

Fighting for chieftainship is not a decent style for the Batswana. This shows that it is a problem to their culture. The rightful person must rule. Both texts start with an unpleasant situation where the main characters fight with the ambition of becoming chief. The situation becomes worse and the author resolves the conflict by killing the main characters. Only in Maragana, Mosila who is not the legitimate chief, survives. The question is why the author in Magagana should have both of them killed. The reader is puzzled because the author cannot resolve the conflict. Will the tribe prosper without a chief? The texts leave us with no answers. The main characters here fight to satisfy their ambition and not for the good of the tribe's well-being and this leads to a disaster.

To fight for chieftaincy casts the dignity of the Batswana culture in a negative light. This brings us to the question whether this gives us a clear picture of how Batswana culture works concerning chieftaincy. Is chieftainship obtained by force or is it hereditary? Does this impress or teach our new generation how chieftaincy works? This is something that destroys the nation and the younger generation will never know who must become a chief or not. Chieftainship must be understood as something hereditary from father to son.

5.3. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND WITCHCRAFT

In order to understand the hero clearly, he must be studied against the social and religious background within which he operates. The hero in Pelo e ntsho operates in a situation in which witchcraft is over-stressed. The actions of the hero put his life in a dangerous situation.

His life is controlled by the supernatural forces and renders him unable to differentiate between good and evil. He is unable to run away from it. Keikepetse proposes to Tsholofelo who rejects him. Because of the strong belief in witchcraft and traditional healing, he thinks that the only way to resolve his problems is by using medicinal charms. The question is why Letsipa has to ask for a heart of a person knowing that it could mean killing somebody. This is really difficult for the readers because they do not understand what the author is trying to accomplish. Asking for a heart one may say that Letsipa wants to expose Nthite's witchcraft and also wants to take his revenge from Keikepetse because the punishment was not proper and the results for Keikepetse hurt much.

The decision of Keikepetse's mother, Nthite, after Keikepetse's rejection by Tsholofelo, is not acceptable. She should have advised him that Tsholofelo is not the only girl in the village. He must look for another one even though no one wants to marry a witch. His ambition to win Tsholofelo's heart forces him to kill Neo.

It is also surprising that all the witches, i.e. Nthite and her friends, want to kill Neo. Is it because they are jealous of her? Is she more beautiful than other girls in the village? Do they want to kill her for the sake of killing? Is it because she is a Christian? Here the author indicates that, for the witches, the life of a person is not valuable. They can kill anyone and at anytime they want to. I think witches are invisible murderers and they must get a severe punishment.

The death of Keikepetse and the other witches serves as a punishment for their evil deeds. This idea does not mean that tragedy revolves around the death of the main character alone, but that it involves the death of other characters as well. The author gives the impression that if you are a witch your final reward is death, forgetting that witches are also human beings. They also have the right to live. The text also shows the conflict between Christianity and traditional culture.

Another important question about witchcraft and traditional healing is that, if witchcraft is a black art, why do they not publicly teach people about it so that everyone can benefit from that? This instils superstition in people. Christianity in Pelo e ntsho brings the opposing forces i.e. good and evil to clash. Kgomotso and Morule represent Christianity and

Keikepetse, Nthite and other witches represent witchcraft. Nthite wants Kgomotso and Morule to forget about God and to allow her to teach them witchcraft. At the end Nthite is converted to Christianity, a different way. The problem is why Nthite has to teach them witchcraft because they are against that. You cannot force a horse to drink water if it does not want to. Let the people be free and exercise their rights and enjoy their religion.

Ga ke mosimanyana, shows the role played by witchcraft and traditional healing. The characters believe strongly in witchcraft. The fight between Kedigapile, Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse is not proper. They should have asked for advice before taking action. Taking the livestock of Maitsegotlhe and Bantobetse, I think is overstepping the boundaries of justice. Even if you have lodged a complaint, you cannot just take the law into your hands. What Kedigapile has done is totally unacceptable.

Fighting with traditional healers indicates that the belief in traditional healers is very strong. The death of Maitsegotlhe does not come as a surprise. This is what he deserves because he thinks he knows much more than Bantobetse.

Both texts have a similar goal. The author succeeds in showing that the Batswana do sometimes practise witchcraft to satisfy their personal ambition and that they strongly believe in it. Unfortunately both texts end with a bad situation where some of the characters die, but as a just punishment for their evil deeds.

Concerning witchcraft and traditional healing the texts maintain that some of the cultural practices of the Batswana are unacceptable. Witchcraft shows how bad people can be. But the Batswana culture accepted this because it is one of their cultural practices.

Witches can kill people and cause harm to them. They can make people live in fear. According to Schapera, if you are from a family of witches, you cannot be married. In marriage, the Batswana avoid families of witches. The spokespeople believe that there are witches, but because witchcraft is a disgusting thing, no one wanted to say a word about it. According to the Batswana tradition, traditional healers are very important. They heal people and protect their families and their livestock. But in Ga ke mosimanyana and in Pelo e ntsho, people misuse traditional doctors. They use them to kill people and work with the witches,

and in the end they also become witches or die because most of the time witches force them to do evil things. The author in Ga ke mosimanyana is making fun of witchcraft, portraying it by making the whole idea (i.e. fighting with witch-doctors) ridiculous.

The interviewees, but not all of them, believe that witchcraft should not be abolished because this forms part of their culture. The Batswana can accept civilization and transformation but we must not forget our roots.

In concluding this section one may say that although witchcraft is one of the Batswana traditional ways of life, the younger people believe that it is against the modern lifestyle. People have changed for the better. They do not want to make their life miserable with witchcraft. Older people believe that even though witchcraft is evil, it forms part of their cultural identity. I think in this modern era, witchcraft must be one of the practices that should be eliminated.

5.4. CULTURAL IDENTITY AND HONOURING THE ANCESTORS

Honouring the ancestors plays an important part in the life of the Batswana. They believe that their lives are protected by their ancestors. They direct their activities towards their ancestors. Moji Motlhabi starts with Moji and his sister's, Mmabana's, unpleasant moment of facing the world without their parents who were killed in the war with the Batlokwa. They arrive at the mountain of Modimolle which they call a place of protection. They believe that their ancestors will protect them against their enemies since they previously defeated the Batlokwa at this mountain.

What Moloto is trying to accomplish here, is that he wants to show the reader that the Batswana believe in their ancestors. They rather do what is against their will so that they can satisfy their ancestors. The texts clearly indicate that the ancestors are used as a positive force. They even punish Moji for deceiving his people, killing others for no particular reason and misusing the people's belief in the ancestors.

The power of the ancestors is also exercised in Bogosi Kupe. Serokolo disturbs the peace and the smooth running of the tribe by fighting for the chieftainship which does not belong to him. According to the Batswana tradition, chieftainship is something sacred, that should not

be dealt with lightly. The Batswana believe that chieftainship is controlled by the ancestors. The central issue in Bogosi kupe is that what Serokolo is doing shows that he has no respect for chieftainship and for the ancestors. He is not aware that he puts chieftainship at risk. His motives remain unclear and it also shows that there is power struggle (like in Maragana) and conflicts of interest, etc. He forgets that chieftainship is something that you cannot smear. It is not changeable and you cannot borrow it. Chieftainship according to the Batswana culture passes from father to son, but people seemingly forget what is right. They do what pleases them. In the end, the actions and the ambitions of Serokolo drive him to his death. This is a sign that if a person interferes with chieftainship, the ancestors will punish him with death or bring misfortunes on him.

The Batswana believe in ancestors. Moji Motlhabi, Pelo e ja serati and Bogosi kupe clearly illustrate the issue of ancestors. The interviewees and the characters indicate that the ancestors exist. They believe that the ancestors can protect them. They reveal themselves in our dreams and instructs us to do something and if they are not happy, they punish us. After that Nombini rescued Dithole, the society and Dithole's parents allow Nombini and Dithole to marry. They believe it is the wish of the ancestors. The role of the ancestors is also indicated in Bogosi kupe where Sergeant Botipe tells people that chieftainship is sacred and is controlled by the ancestors. Moji also respects the ancestors.

Ancestors are important in various ways by revealing themselves to people. Naming a child for your grandfather or grandmother, is an indication that you want to feel the presence of your grandparents as your ancestors.

One may say that ancestors are an important concern of all the Batswana in South Africa including other societies. Even if their ancestors are dead, they feel as if they are still alive. They give us a sense of the Batswana cultural identity.

5.5. FINDINGS

In the end one may stress the point that culture plays a major role in the selected texts. The authors try their level best to act out, or stage conflicts in the culture, conflicting values and make readers understand what culture is and how it works. All the texts have very concrete similarities and they all enlighten us about the Batswana culture. But what they preach in

these texts, is not what we see today because people do not seem anxious to realise how important their cultural identity is.

Traditionally, the Batswana are fond of their language. They do not want to learn other languages except their language, that is Setswana. They are very concerned about their things and their language. But today they mix their languages.

Nowadays there is a general complaint that the youth has lost respect for their elders and authority. Many cultural practices of the Batswana can change but the values of their culture will remain unchanged.

Concerning the future of our culture, I think it is hard to tell. I do not see a bright future for our culture. Today there are so many things that affect our culture, i.e. civilization, urbanisation, politics and we cannot run away from them. Our cultural values like respect, good behaviour, remain even though people do not take them into consideration.

The selected texts, Pelo e ja serati, Dintshontsho tsa lorato, Maragana, Magagana, Pelo e ntsho, Bogosi Kupe, Moji Motlhabi and Matlhotlhapelo, are conflict-centred on four cultural aspects of the Batswana viz. marriage customs, chieftainship, witchcraft and the ancestors. The aspects are clearly stated but some of them seem to lose the point of how the Batswana culture really works. The texts really open up new possibilities of being Tswana again. Pelo e ja serati and Bogosi kupe open up these new possibilities. The characters Dithole, Nombini and Modimoeng believe that a loving heart knows no bounds. No cultural pressure should be put on the people forcing them to marry their cousins as the culture suggests. A new marriage rule really emerges from these texts. Bogosi kupe does not give us a sense of respect for ancestors and legitimate authority but a new religious sense when Modimoeng is meeting God in his magic forest and acting accordingly.

The texts teach people that Tswana cultural marriage is the concern of the parents. The partners are not involved in the arrangements of the marriage. The texts do not give the young people the chance to choose for themselves. Even if Dithole indicates this modern change when falling in love with Nombini, his parents are against that. Bogosi kupe also demonstrates that it is better to follow your heart. I think if marriage can still not involve the

two partners and marry your cousin like in the past, people would curse the Batswana traditional marriage.

Another important part in the Batswana marriage is polygamy. In the past this was practised by everyone and Schapera also indicates this that “a man’s first wife is generally selected for him by his parents, any others he chooses himself”. According to the texts, this was practised by the chiefs only. In Moji Motlhabi, Moji had many wives. Every year when the girls from the initiation school come back, he chooses a wife from them and this was another way of the Batswana cultural marriage, that is why the chief had many wives in the past. I think this type of marriage is bad because Moji did not think of the consequences, for example diseases.

People never questioned this because they know that according to Batswana culture, it would be normal for the chief to marry many wives. As the chief, he will be able to support them, by giving them food and clothes. According to the Batswana custom, no woman must be left unmarried. Matlhodi’s parents in Bogosi kupe were afraid that she would become ‘Lefetwa’ that is why they choose a husband to marry her. This type of marriage helps the Batswana to avoid problems like ‘Lefetwa’. The importance of this practice is that every woman must be married. The problem to this type of marriage is that no one can enjoy his/her marriage, because you are forced to marry a person whom you do not know or like. You do not know his behaviour or you do not even know that you will learn to like him.

The same thing happens in Maragana and Magagana. People are fighting for the chieftainship. They do not respect tradition and legitimacy. They want to satisfy their needs. They show people that a brave person can take the chieftainship, whether he is born to it or not. Ceremonial services and the crowning of the chief do not exist any more because everyone wants to become a chief and this leads to fights. People are now confused. They do not know how chieftainship really works. We do not know whether you get it when you fight or whether it is hereditary. For the young people this really is frustrating because they do not even understand how culture works. They do not know who should become chief.

According to the Batswana culture, if a chief is weak, he must be killed. This is indicated in Maragana where Mojabeng is killed because he is weak. By killing Mojabeng, the texts clearly show the Batswana culture. But it is amazing to find out the spokespeople didn’t

make mention of it. The authors of the two texts Maragana and Magagana indicate that sometimes there are fights for the chieftainship. Mosila and Lerothodi, Molaodi and Moilantwa all fight for the chieftainship. Even though they fight, the legitimate chief should win, but the author does not bring that out. All the main characters are killed except Mosila who is not the legitimate person. In Bogosi kupe, Serokolo who is not a legitimate person, is killed.

The chief was always treated with great respect. The tribe believes that he can lead them through life, feed them when they are hungry and heal them when their hearts are broken. The chief should in turn respect his people and he will also be respected. But today the respect of authority is at stake. There is no sense of legitimacy.

Nowadays the succession to office is no longer important. Today the tribe can choose any person to become chief as long as he belongs to the royal family. Things have changed but still the chief has to perform some of the traditional duties viz. to convene tribal meetings, and arrange tribal ceremonies.

In conclusion one may indicate that there is nothing important that can be done without the knowledge of the chief and he is responsible for maintaining law and order throughout the tribe. Even if today's young people do not respect the chief like in the past, he still has a say in the tribe, because no tribe can function well without a chief.

Witchcraft and traditional healing also bring a negative attitude. In the past and according to the Batswana culture, witches met during the night to rehearse their songs. Traditional healing is used to heal sick people and protect them and their livestock. The texts Pelo e ntsho and Ga ke mosimanyana indicate that witchcraft is used to humiliate and kill innocent people. It teaches people to become jealous of others and the only thing witches know is to kill and make people feel uncomfortable. Ga ke mosimanyana indicates that traditional healing is an aspect of traditional culture and that it is evil and should be abandoned. It is believed that to become a traditional healer, is condoned by the ancestors, but if you do not use it well, they will take your power away. These texts teach us that traditional healers are also witches. They are being used to kill people. So, what can we learn from them?

Absolutely nothing, because they also do not appreciate their gift. They misuse it. The misuse of traditional healers and witchcraft indicates the loss of the Batswana cultural identity.

Honouring the ancestors in Pelo e ja serati, Moji Motlhabi and Bogosi Kupe gives us a sense of strong belief in the Batswana culture. According to the Batswana, ancestors are the most respected people. This is indicated in Pelo e ja serati where Dithole flees to the Mountain of Ancestors. From this aspect, one can learn that the Batswana believe in their ancestors and respect them. It is their culture. The ancestors are associated with respect for authority, for strangers, legitimacy, proper procedure and moral right (e.g. not killing people).

The way these texts present the marriage customs, witchcraft and traditional healing and chieftainship, no one can ever think of going back.

From the interviewees, and from my observation, it is only the adults who respect their culture. Young people are gradually moving away from their culture. Eventually they are going to lose their cultural identity as the results of the influence of the Western Civilization and integration. Another possibility is the development of a new culture.

According to these texts, there are chances or new possibilities of being a Motswana again. There is also an indication of reshaping Batswana cultural identity. Today people are not much interested in culture especially the youth. They want to change and move towards civilization.

5.6. LITERATURE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Great books have fruitful relationships to the cultures from which they arise. For me the relationship we find in literature is essential. When traditional culture no longer exists among the tribes, books are there to remind us or serve as cultural memory.

Literature can arouse every conceivable kind of emotion in us, often several emotions at once. It helps us to love, to sympathise, to tolerate, to reject and to realise the realities of the known and of the unknown. Literature is an art that an artist uses. It is not merely an idea, a theory or a system of thought although these things do enter into it.

It seems reasonable that we must read literature not only to appreciate it as an art, to recognise its beauty of form, but also to gain experience about our culture.

Literature partially reveals and maintains culture. Even today culture plays an important role in South Africa. Culture in this sense should be understood as something more important. Culture always implies the fruit of thought in actual living. In order to gather and supplement those fruits of thought needed for a deepened culture, a person must go to literature.

The selected texts point out the Batswana culture and cultural identity, how it works, its advantages and its disadvantages. Nowadays culture can be of disadvantage because no one can cope with it, especially animal skin clothes, food and other articles or ideas. The interviewees feel uncomfortable with traditional clothes and feel that they cannot wear them in front of their children because some of them reveal parts of their bodies.

It can be said that the way these texts deal with the four aspects of culture does not only reflect cultural practices, but also reveals the total feeling about these and how people react to these practices and learn how to deal with them.

5.7. RECOMMENDATIONS

The voice raised by the literary texts must sometimes be heard. In these texts people are faced with their culture but sometimes the tribe or individuals can abuse it.

My personal opinion concerning marriage customs is that people must make their own choice. A man and a woman must be given a chance to choose their own partners. People must not forget that "a loving heart knows no bounds". Tradition can be followed but not at the expense of other people's lives. People must be given the freedom of choice.

Concerning chieftainship, I think people should be taught how chieftainship works and this will prevent people from fighting for the chieftainship. There will be no corruption among the tribe. The legitimate chief must be given a chance to rule and exercise his powers. The texts imply that the relationship between men and women is not the same. Women are not supposed to have any say concerning marriage and are not involved in chieftainship affairs. It seems as if women are less important in the tribe. They do not appreciate their existence as

mothers. They forget that there are strong women like Nombini who are prepared to fight for her needs because she wants to be married to Dithole, because a loving heart knows no bounds. She does not hesitate to get what she wants. I think men and women should be equal as they are today and the only thing that they should bear in mind is that they should not forget their values such as respect and good behaviour.

I think witchcraft must be stopped. This is leading us nowhere. It makes people unhappy and living in fear of other people. Concerning Christianity people should not interfere with other people's religion. Their religion must be respected.

One can never say people should obey the ancestors because we are not sure of their existence. But people do believe that they exist and that they protect their lives. Sometimes it is difficult to question the belief of people in ancestors because the idea seems to be rooted in them.

The main thing is that these texts do try to give a meaningful image of the Batswana culture and stages conflicts in traditional Batswana culture. I think people must make their own choice whether to change or to remain traditional. But the question is, is it really possible for people to go back to their African roots and continue that while many cultural practices and beliefs are changing? If one has to answer this, I think going back to our roots nowadays will not be possible. There are many things that are happening, viz. crime, murder, rapes and other tendencies. Most people have little respect for life. They have lost all their traditional values. Maybe if people can change their attitude towards life, and value it as highly important, and respect it, people would return to their culture and their traditional values and lead an enjoyable life without killing each other and committing crimes.

Finally one may add that this study appeals to the Batswana society to respect and honour their tradition. Maybe this can help to eliminate murders, stop crime, rape, and other crimes, and help to protect the values of the Batswana culture and its cultural identity. But this is not to say that traditional ways should be abolished, but what I am suggesting is that people must accept the change because it is impossible to go back to our roots. We cannot afford to face its challenges and its disadvantages.

I do not see a bright future for Batswana culture because most people seem to have forgotten how to be a Motswana in the true sense of the word. It is not that they do not want to be Batswana, but civilization forces them to turn their backs on it. But the Batswana can remain true to their values, respect for ancestors, service of the tribe, living a normal life, respect for legitimacy, even though they do not practise the traditional customs anymore. The challenge today really is to find new customs and practices that remain true to these inner values.

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