

**Perspectives on female characters in D.P.S.
Monyaise's *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and
Zakes Mda's *Black***

Diamond

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Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree *Magister* in *Setswana* at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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May 2014

DISSERTATION DEDICATIONS

To Boniswa (Bonny), Vuyiswa (Mooksie), Matshidiso (Tshidi) and Unathi (Panana).

DECLARATION

I declare that

PERSPECTIVES ON FEMALE CHARACTERS IN D.P.S. MONYAISE'S *NGAKA*, *MOSADI MOOKA* AND ZAKES MDA'S *BLACK DIAMOND*

Is my own work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated by means of reference, and that I did not previously submit this dissertation for a degree at another university.

.....

N.P. QOKELA

.....

DATE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost I would like to thank God Almighty for sustaining and carrying me through.

Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.

1 Chronicles 29:11

Secondly, I would like to thank my family members, particularly my mother, Zanyiwe (Nokhaya) Julia Qokela, for instilling in me a passion for education, an opportunity for which she has sacrificed a lot.

Thirdly, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the Research Unit director, Prof. J. Roux, for his kindness and encouragement. Mrs. Mackenzie and Mrs. Van Tonder are a blessing.

Fourthly, thanks to the library staff members, particularly Ms. E. Rood, Ms. H.M. Buys and Mrs. M. van der Walt for being always ready to assist.

Last but not least, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my supervisor, Prof. Phil Van Schalkwyk for his tireless and endless efforts. Prof. Phil Van Schalkwyk has always been willing to provide his distinguished supervision, valuable suggestions and comments to help shape this study. I thank Prof. Rigardt Pretorius also for his helpful comments and guidance as co-supervisor.

ABSTRACT

In this study, D.P.S. Monyaise's *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Zakes Mda's *Black Diamond* are analysed in relation to narrative perspectives on female characters. The main aim of this study is to show how cultural narrative perspectives apply in the comparative study in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*, to determine how female characters, particularly Diarona in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond*, are portrayed.

The argument maintained in this study is that, although Monyaise in his *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* gives his female characters an exceptionally strong voice, the social and literary perspectives in his novel still draw very sturdily on traditional frameworks. Monyaise's narrative style and his narrative investigation of his main themes are evidently influenced by views informed by a traditional frame within which women occupy a culturally marginalized position. Mda, on the other hand, controversially challenges dominant views and consequent modes of behaviour, while also expanding the boundaries of creative writing.

Research on the portrayal of female characters in Batswana literature is still lacking. This study makes a contribution in the sense that it is an explorative investigation from the perspective of postclassical cognitive narratology, which therefore attempts to approach Batswana literature from a fresh theoretical point of view. The intention is also to enrich the field of Batswana literature by adopting a comparative approach.

In achieving this aim, this work adopts the following structure. Chapter one provides the aim and focus of the study. Chapter two discusses the theoretical framework and crucial key terms. Chapter three establishes a background with regard to traditional Batswana cultural views on Batswana women, with emphasis on stereotypical perspectives on women identified through the application of theoretical insights with regard to frames and scripts. The analysis of these traditional perspectives is carried out with reference to traditional Batswana women and the following: the work place; family life; legislation and leadership roles; education; religious belief; and traditional marriage. Chapter four is a comparative analysis with specific attention to the portrayal of the main female characters, that is Diarona in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond*, through application of the theoretical and cultural framework constructed in chapter two and three respectively. Chapter five provides concluding remarks.

KEYWORDS

Setswana literature; novels; portrayal; female characters; cognitive science; frames; scripts; narrative perspective; D.P.S. Monyaise; Zakes Mda.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Contextualization of D.P.S. Monyaise and Zakes Mda

The intention of this dissertation is to conduct a comparative study of narrative perspectives on female characters in D.P.S Monyaise's *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Zakes Mda's *Black Diamond*. In order to shed light on this, this chapter will be structured as follows: Firstly, contextual information about D.P.S Monyaise and Zakes Mda is provided. This will be followed by brief background information on Monyaise and Mda respectively, with emphasis on how these biographical details connect with the theme, style and context of the two writers. A literature review is also provided.

Secondly, the problem statement is presented, and the aims of the study are briefly stated, after which a central theoretical statement is formulated. Lastly the research method is described and the chapter division is indicated.

The manner of writing in Setswana literature may come across as uninviting to the modern generation Motswana reader, because it seems to show insufficient adaptation to an exploration of current narrative styles and themes¹. It appears that the themes of the writers, the writers' perception of the world, their subject matter, structuring, style and devices for character depiction are still inspired by traditional narrative perspectives. While not claiming that this is necessarily unacceptable, the study aims at investigating other (more current) narrative possibilities and perspectives, and therefore has opted for a comparative approach. Another reason for this study is to expand research on narrative theory and characterization in the field of Setswana novels. Moreover, research on the portrayal of female characters through narrative perspective in Setswana literature is still lacking. This study aims at conducting such an analysis by undertaking a comparative analysis of D.P.S Monyaise's *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* (1965) and Zakes Mda's *Black Diamond* (2009).

1.1.1 Background to D.P.S. Monyaise and Zakes Mda

Both writers are prominent black South African writers, who have written their novels in different South African official languages, commenting on social change. Monyaise in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* is presenting the results of urbanization in the apartheid era on social ideologies and behaviour (Pilane, 2002:1). According to Andrzejewski et al (1985:640) Monyaise's novel is characterized by "grim and realistic reportage" relating to social issues. Zakes Mda in *Black Diamond* is commenting on the social changes following the euphoric 1990s. He traces the

¹ See Mhlambi's (2012) analysis of IsiZulu fiction with focus on the implication of new perspectives and approaches of post-apartheid narrative discourse for both print and broadcast media.

growing disillusionment and despondency of more recent years (Msomi, 2011:18), reflecting on contemporary avaricious attitudes to material wealth (Molakeng, 2009:5).

Monyaise is a Setswana novelist and Mda writes in English. The authors' texts have been published in a different time frame. Monyaise's novel was published in 1965 while Mda's novel appeared in 2009. The two texts are divided by a forty-four year gap with Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* published twenty-nine years before South Africa attained democracy, while Mda's *Black Diamond* was published fifteen years post-apartheid.

The following is a brief summary of the background information on D.P.S. Monyaise and Zakes Mda.

1.1.1.1 D.P.S. Monyaise

There seems to be a minor discrepancy with regard to the recording of Monyaise's year of birth; Malope (1977:33) and Malepe (1974:7) state that Monyaise was born in the year 1921. However, Monyaise (as quoted in an interview with Pretorius, 1990:157) records that he was born in the year 1920. Monyaise's full names are Daniel Phillip Semakaleng Monyaise. He was born in Ophirton near Johannesburg. Monyaise grew up under supervision of his grandparents in Matile village where he spent most of his time not attending school, until the 1930s (Malope, 1977:34). He then started to attend school in 1934 in Lotlhakane (Malope, 1977:34). Moreover, he attended the Lichtenburg Amalgamated School from 1940 (Malope, 1977:34). Malope (1977:34) states that in 1940 Monyaise successfully passed his standard four, five and six. He then returned to his parents who now lived in Sophiatown in the Gauteng Province in the beginning of the year 1941 and went on to start form one at St. Cyprian's combined (Malope, 1977:35). In 1944 he was among the first group that completed their matriculation education at Johannesburg Bantu High, which was later called Madibane High (Malope, 1977:36). From his studies he developed a passion for art, which was inspired by his English teachers, Mr Siphon Sizwe and Professor P.C. Mokgokong (Malope, 1977:36). During his matriculation year in 1944 Monyaise went on to be the chairperson of the literary and debating society from which he developed his writing and creative skills (Malope, 1977:36).

According to Malope (1977:37), Monyaise went through a devastating experience in his matric year, when his youth girlfriend whom he intended to marry, dumped him and accepted a marriage proposal from another man. As a result, Monyaise got mentally disturbed (Malope, 1977:37). In support of the statement Malepe (1974:8) asserts the following,

... a disappointment in a love affair left him temporarily insane but ... the experience left an indelible mark on his attitude to life. This attitude is

usually reflected in his works where he tends to depict the sordid side of life.

Even though he had a bad experience of losing a lover Monyaise successfully completed his matriculation exam, but was unable to further his studies because of financial constraints (Malope, 1977:37). Monyaise then resorted to teaching at Johannesburg Bantu High without a teacher's qualification (Malope, 1977:38). However, he went on to study teaching in 1952 in Kilnerton, and not in 1951 as Mogajane (1964:443) asserts (Malope, 1977:38). After completing his teacher's certificate in 1953, Monyaise continued to teach for a year in 1954 at Munsieville Secondary in Krugersdorp and not in Sikitla and Meadowlands as Mogajane has stated (Malope, 1977:38). In 1962 he became principal of Wolmaranstad Combined Primary (Malope, 1977:39). In 1967 he accepted the position of headmaster at Kutlwano Secondary School in Ventersdorp (Malope, 1977:39). In 1967 Monyaise relocated to the Gauteng Province and he taught at Meadowlands Secondary until 1972 (Malope, 1977:39-40). In 1973 he was appointed at Thutolore Secondary where he worked until 1974 (Malope, 1977:40). In 1975, Monyaise was appointed as deputy examiner of the Johannesburg North Circuit. He decided to upgrade his academic studies by enrolling for a B.A. Degree at the University of South Africa, which he completed in 1977 (Malope, 1977:40).

During 1954 Monyaise started writing novels (Malope, 1977:38). Monyaise is one of the prominent writers in Setswana literature (Pretorius, 1990:14). He received an honorary Sol Plaatje Merit Award and another Price Award from the department of Arts and Culture (Mahlaka, 2005:1). He published his first novel entitled *Omphile Umphi Modise* in 1960, his second novel *Marara* in 1961, followed by *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* in 1965. He then wrote *Bogosi Kupe* in 1967 and *Go ša Baori* in 1970. According to the interview that Pretorius (1990:167) conducted with Monyaise there are about ten literary texts that Monyaise states he burnt before they could be printed and published, because his initial intention for writing was never to get his works published (Pretorius, 1990:167). It is actually his wife who encouraged him to print and publish his works (Pretorius, 1990:167).

It is evident that Monyaise was an ardent learner and had a stern passion for the arts, despite his trying circumstances (Malope, 1977:39). Furthermore, he was the type of writer who wrote narratives that were inspired by his personal experiences (Malepe, 1974:8). Monyaise's narrative perspectives, particularly on female characters, will be investigated further in the unfolding analysis of his novel *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* (1965).

1.1.1.2 Zakes Mda

Mazibuko (2007) has completed an in-depth study on Mda's background, which will be the main reference for the purpose of providing a brief contextualization of Mda's life and his thematic interests that have influenced his narratives. With that said, unlike Mazibuko's (2007) contextualization of Mda's biographical information, Mda's background information in this research will only focus on his fictional writing excluding his theatre productions. Zakes Mda's full names according to the background information included in the back matter of his novel *Black Diamond* are Zanemvula Kizito Gatyeni Mda. Mda is a novelist, composer, filmmaker and painter (Mda, 2009: back matter). As stated in the background information (Mda, 2009: back matter), Mda travels between South Africa and the United States of America (Mda, 2009: back matter). Mda is an appointed professor of creative writing at Ohio University, in the United States of America (Mda, 2009: back matter). While in South Africa, he is employed across the country as a dramaturge at the Market Theatre and a director of Southern African Multimedia AIDS Trust in Sophiatown, Johannesburg (Mda, 2009: back matter). In the Eastern Cape he is a beekeeper (Mda, 2009: back matter).

According to Mazibuko (2007:2) Mda was born to Rose and A.P. Mda, in Soweto, Johannesburg in 1948 in the month of October on the sixth, just before Apartheid. Mda comes from an educated, middle class family. His mother was a nurse and his father a renowned lawyer, and founder and former president of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) (Mazibuko, 2007:2-3). Mazibuko (2007:3) states that Mda's family went in exile to Lesotho in the mid-1960s, where he completed his matric and then went on to study towards a Law degree. Later in his life, Mda travelled to the United States of America to further his studies and obtained a Masters Degree in Theatre studies and another one in Mass Communication at Ohio University. He completed his Doctoral studies at the University of Cape Town in 1989 (Mazibuko, 2007:3).

After completing his Masters studies in 1985, Mda returned to work in Lesotho for the national television broadcaster (Mazibuko, 2007:8), and then later he was appointed lecturer in the English Department of the National University of Lesotho (Mazibuko, 2007:8). According to Mazibuko (2007:8) it was during this time that he started to produce theatre and act as founder of the Marotholi Travelling Theatre, which was part of his doctoral thesis published in *When People Play People* (1993).

The year 1995 marked Mda's debut as a novelist (Mazibuko, 2007:16). Mazibuko (2007:16-17) claims Mda's novels continue to be inspired by the themes and style presented in his theatre productions, such as current affairs with anti-colonial and post-apartheid liberation discourse. He participates with an interest in the struggle against the abuse of material wealth, against

oppression, power and social divisions. His work is inspired by his broadened creative horizons as both an international and national scholar (Mazibuko, 2007:17-18). From his broad exposure, Mda has been writing his novels in English. He has written six novels, including *Black Diamond* (2009). His other novels are: *Ways of Dying* (1995), *The Heart of Redness* (2000), *The Madonna of Excelsior* (2000), *The Whale Caller* (2005) and *Cion* (2007). He has won major South African and British literary awards for his novels and plays, including the MNet Book prize, the Olive Schreiner Prize, the Commonwealth Prize for Fiction and the Sunday Times Fiction Award (Mazibuko, 2007:1). Mda's style of writing challenges the status quo and engages the reader in interesting narrative perspectives on current affairs while also catering for the reader's entertainment and active response, which is a skill that can be credited to his prolific theatre productions. Mda through his writing is not only limited to his personal experience. He draws from the world surrounding him, his experience in the world of art, and is also inventive in his narrative style.

Now that a concise orientation with regard to background information on D.P.S. Monyaise and Zakes Mda has been provided, the discussion can turn to a literature review on both writers' works.

1.1.2 Literature review

In the Batswana culture, the Batswana people had been telling stories long before Setswana developed also as a written language (Letsie, 2002:30). Based on Dikotla's (2007) research, it can be argued that Batswana women's songs have also played a major role in the development and preservation of the Setswana language. Pilane (2002:1) states that the nineteenth century marks the beginning of the introduction of westernization and written Setswana literature.

D.P.S. Monyaise's novel *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* (1965) explores the social transition from the traditional Batswana lifestyle to modern city life. Of specific interest is Monyaise's character portrayal. Although he does feature the older generation, his main focus is on the younger generation. The events of *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* mainly unfold at the Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg. Monyaise's fictional exploration is conducted with specific attention to female characters faced by social change. The novel reflects the social reality of urban women during 1965.

It is thought to be fruitful to place D.P.S. Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* alongside a recent South African novel, which also deals with social change and women. Indeed, literature has a central role to play in imagining a possible life and future, in exploring the possible, and therefore the field of Setswana literature may benefit from a comparison with a writer of Zakes Mda's calibre and inventiveness.

Zakes Mda is a rather unique voice in South African English literature. Since his first novel, the seminal *Ways of Dying* (1995), he has built a reputation as an exceptionally gifted and imaginative author whose work exhibits not only elements of magic realism, but also strong satirical intent. Like Ivan Vladislavić, from the very beginning of his literary career he has steered clear of the ubiquitous reportorial mode of writing in South African English literature. His work is also characterised by a complex literary perspective on women. Nokuthula Mazibuko (2007) has studied the ways in which Mda has made women central to his novels. Mazibuko's (2007) study focuses on the following novels by Mda: *Ways of Dying* (1995a), *She Plays with the Darkness* (1995b), *The Heart of Redness* (2000) and *The Madonna of Excelsior* (2002). Her research shows that Mda's portrayal of women forms part of his vision for the new South Africa, one in which individuals are shown to accept responsibility for recreating their lives. Mda's novels could be described as inventive explorations of inventive living. In fact, Mda presents not only new ways of living, but also new ways of writing.

His novel *Black Diamond* (2009) departs from the magic realist thrust of his earlier work, though some remnants of the magical still remain. This novel, which has grown from the fertile soil of his own disillusionment, expands on the ever-present satirical drive of his work, this time directed at the ills of present day South Africa. Originally conceived as a film script, the novel contains a thoroughly engrossing storyline, with strong dialogue and biting though humorous social critique. As before, female characters feature prominently, but in this respect the novel gains additional strength when read against the background of his existing work. Indeed, the problems of women cannot be divorced from the greater South African context, and it is precisely the latter that is explored with great force in *Black Diamond*. Within that larger context, Mda's presentation of female characters gains further resonance.

Eagleton (1983:2) argues that literature cannot be defined as only fictional, imaginative and creative writing, but as a kind of writing which, in the words of the Russian Formalist critic Roman Jakobson "represents an 'organized violence committed on ordinary speech'". With reference to Jakobson, Eagleton (1983:2) suggests that literature is the result of a transformed and intensified ordinary language, and that it is an intentional and systematic deviation from everyday speech. Language in literature is used in an unusual way that is not common in ordinary language, and in this resides its "literariness". For example, note the following description taken from Ndebele's *The Cry of Winnie Mandela* (2003:10), a scenario about one of the experiences of a woman waiting for her absent husband,

The erosion of moral and ethical steadfastness occurs like the unnoticeable eating away of a mountain by sun, rain, and wind.

Suddenly, if you look too closely, a little portion of the mountain that you knew is gone.

In the above extract, one can instantly tell the difference of this literary statement from one expressed in ordinary language. The tone and use of language is transformed from its literal meaning, and it is intensified through the use of simile to stand here in excess of its abstractable meaning. As a result, what happens then is, as Eagleton (1983:2) puts it, the language in use “draws attention to itself, flaunts its material being”. From Eagleton’s (1983) discussion one can conclude that literature is an unusual use of language that stems from the writer’s imaginative and aesthetic skills.

According to Eagleton (1983:10-16) literature is also strongly influenced by ideology. Ideology relates to, in Eagleton’s words, “the ways in which what we say and believe connects with the power-structure and power-relations of the society we live in” (Eagleton, 1983:14). Eagleton (1983:15) elaborates,

I do not mean by ‘ideology’ simply the deeply entrenched, often unconscious beliefs which people hold; I mean more particularly those modes of feeling, valuing, perceiving and believing which have some kind of relation to the maintenance and reproduction of social power.

Literature may be influenced by the authors’ value-judgment perspective, which makes their work not only subjective but also complex (Eagleton, 1983:11-16). Value-judgment can be understood as the author’s judgment that is encouraged by what he/she values, and this value-judgment also applies to the readers of their texts (Eagleton, 1983:11-12). How we interpret a literary text also depends to some extent on “the light of our own concerns” (Eagleton, 1983:12). It is important to note that, “the value-judgments by which literature is constituted are historically variable” (Eagleton, 1983:16). In addition, the value-judgments relate closely to social ideologies and “they refer in the end not simply to private taste, but to the assumptions by which certain social groups exercise and maintain power over others” (Eagleton, 1983:16).

This aspect of literature can be explained with recourse to various contextual literary approaches and theories, but for the purposes of this study I will align my research with more recent developments in postclassical narratology that, amongst other things, utilise the insights provided by cognitive poetics. Donald Norman (1980:1) explains cognitive science as the study of human cognition or mental processes that include knowing, paying attention, remembering and other aspects like reasoning and perspective. According to Norman (1980:1) cognitive science is a science that pays attention to a rich set of interlocking issues. Norman’s (1980:1) argument is that the study and explanation of cognitive science must include several concepts,

including the roles of culture, of social interaction, of emotions and of motivation. These ought to be fundamental parts of the study of the cognitive approach. Therefore he argues that there are several issues that should make up the study of human knowledge, and thereby, the field of cognitive science. Norman (1980:1) states that,

The study of cognitive science requires a complex interaction among different issues of concern, an interaction that will not be properly understood until all parts are understood, with no part independent of the others, the whole requiring the parts, and the parts the whole.

One issue of concern singled out by Norman (1980) is perspective. The study focuses on the issue of perspective and therefore examines the portrayal of female characters with attention to narrative perspectives on women, and of women themselves, with regard to social roles and responsibilities derived from value and belief systems passed down to them.

In order for a reader to build up multifaceted interpretations of a narrative using limited textual or discourse cues, the reader makes use of cognitive frames and scripts by making inferences and assumptions to fill in the gaps (Herman, 2003:10; see also Herman et al., 2005:68, 69). According to Minsky (1979:1) “we can think of a frame as a network of nodes and relations” and “the top levels of a frame are fixed, and represent things that are always true about the supposed situation”; while, “the lower levels have many *terminals* – ‘slots’ that must be filled by specific instances or data”.

Lehnert (1979:85) argues, “scripts describe those conventional situations that are defined by a highly stereotypical sequence of events”. A stereotype, based on Lippmann (1922: 88-91), can be compared to a prototype from which thousands of identical impressions are made. Lippmann (1922:16-17, 91) describes stereotypes as simplistic, fixed, and shared by members of a social group within generations through mass media. From Lippmann’s (1922:91) description, we learn that stereotypes are naïve observations that influence people’s perspectives and how they see the world. In addition, stereotypes are learned, because they are passed down from one generation to the next and spread with the help of the mass media, which then encourages a certain type of a life style adopted by people who share the same culture. Hence, stereotypes verify and echo the accepted ideological views shared by members of a social group (Lippmann, 1922:88-92).

From the discussion above it is evident that this study lends itself to the cognitive approach. Also, Setswana novels have not been studied yet from the perspective of cognitive poetics, and there have not been any comparative studies in this regard of black authors who write in Setswana and English respectively. Existing research on narrative theory in the field of

Setswana literature is confined mainly to short stories (Letsie, 1996 and 2002). Mboniswa (2003) analysed gender identity in Setswana short stories for young adults in *Mmualebe* by R.M. Malope.

Studies devoted to characterization, mainly focus on other genres like oral literature and plays. For example, Seshabela (2003) studied the portrayal of women in the radio series *Motlhabane*, Pilane (1996) explored naming as an aspect of character portrayal in L.D. Raditladi's *Dintshontsho tsa Lorato*, and Kotu (1998) studied J.M. Ntsime's play *Pelo e ja Serati* with specific attention to characterization. Thubisi (1998) presented a paper to prove whether it is a fact or fallacy that Monyaise's female characters are bad. Pretorius (1990) conducted a study on characterization in *Bogosi Kupe* by D.P.S. Monyaise.

Malope's (1977) *Tshekatsheko-tsenelo ya dipadi tsa ntlha tse tlhano tsa ga D.P.S. Monyaise* is an in-depth analysis of Monyaise's first five novels. Mahlaka (2005) completed a study on the analysis of the content and plot in *Marara*. Lesete (1994) studied symbolism in D.P.S. Monyaise's *Bogosi Kupe*. In addition, Lesete (1998) presented an unpublished paper about symbolism of the titles of D.P.S. Monyaise's novels. Manyaka (1992) conducted a study on intersexuality in Setswana on D.P.S. Monyaise and M.T. Mmileng's novels. Rapoo (1993) is the only researcher who has carried out a comparative study of the theory of characterization in M.T. Mmileng's two novels, *Mangomo* and *Lehudu*. Rapoo in her study investigates the way in which characters are presented in Mmileng's novels by comparing and contrasting the development and growth of characters. She focuses specifically on providing a comprehensive background on characterization with the intention of clearing up the confusion around how characters are featured in novels as opposed to real life situations.

Since research on the portrayal of female characters through narrative perspective in Batswana literature is still lacking, my research aims at conducting such an investigation with specific attention to D.P.S. Monyaise's *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka*, supplemented with comparative perspectives on Zakes Mda's *Black Diamond*. Also, it should be noted that my study is an explorative investigation from the perspective of postclassical cognitive narratology, and in this sense attempts to approach Batswana literature from a fresh theoretical point of view. I also intend to enrich the study of Batswana literature by adopting a comparative approach to study how female characters are portrayed, with reference to their behavioural traits through the application of cognitive scientific and explanations of frames and scripts.

1.2 Problem statement

- How is narrative perspective described within the field of cognitive poetics?

- How does cultural narrative perspective apply in the comparative study of *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*?
- How are Diarona in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond* portrayed in terms of narrative perspective?

1.3 Aims

- To provide a cognitive science description of a narrative perspective.
- To investigate how cultural narrative perspective applies in the comparative study of *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*.
- To determine how Diarona in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond* are portrayed in terms of narrative perspective.

1.4 Central theoretical statement

I will argue that, although Monyaise in his *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* foregrounds the Batswana's transition with specific attention to female characters, this novel's social and literary narrative perspectives still draw very strongly on traditional frameworks, whereas Mda's *Black Diamond* not only challenges dominant views and consequent modes of behaviour, to the point of being highly controversial, but also expands the boundaries of creative writing.

1.5 Methodology

- I will analyse the literary texts using the hermeneutical method.
- The theoretical framework as elaborated in chapter two and the insights provided in chapter three of the dissertation will be used to analyse the portrayal of female characters through narrative perspective.
- A comparative analysis of the portrayal of female characters will be conducted, in order to discover instances where female characters are portrayed in terms of their perceived behavioural traits through the application of frames and scripts. With "perspective", I therefore do not mean focalization.
- The methodological procedure will be further explained and refined as it unfolds in the subsequent chapters.

1.6 Chapter division

CHAPTER 1:

Chapter one provides the contextualization, problem statement, aims, the basic hypothesis, methodology and the provisional chapter division.

CHAPTER 2:

This chapter will discuss the theoretical framework and will provide crucial definitions.

CHAPTER 3:

Chapter three will provide background with regard to traditional Batswana cultural ideologies pertaining to Batswana women, with emphasis on stereotypical perspectives on female characters identified through the application of theoretical insights with regard to frames and scripts. This chapter will analyze the Batswana stereotypical cultural ideologies with reference to Batswana women in relation to domestic life and the work place, legislation and leadership roles, Batswana women and education, Batswana women and belief, Batswana women and finances, the traditional Batswana family and traditional marriage.

CHAPTER 4:

In this chapter the two selected novels, *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* by D.P.S. Monyaise and *Black Diamond* by Zakes Mda will be analyzed comparatively with specific attention to the portrayal of female characters. This part of the study will build on the theoretical framework presented in chapter two, and will utilize insights obtained in chapter three with regard to Batswana culture.

CHAPTER 5:

In this chapter concluding remarks on the comparative study of narrative perspectives on black female characters in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond* are provided.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

A theoretical framework is a useful tool that a literary scholar uses to interpret a literary work of art, and it helps with a scientifically valid interpretation of a literary text (Culler, 1997:1). The objective of this chapter is to provide an elaboration of the theoretical framework for the purpose of applying it in Chapter four of this study. Since this study is an explorative investigation from the viewpoint of postclassical cognitive narratology, a detailed discussion of the following terms is provided: reception theory, cognitive science, frames and scripts. I will briefly discuss narrative and characterization respectively. Narrative perspectives will also be explored. An explanation of crucial key terms is provided in the following paragraphs.

2.2 Reception theory

According to Jauss (1990:53) reception theory emerged for the first time as a practical theory in theology, jurisprudence and philosophy after 1950. The theory of reception entails for literature and any form of art to be seen as a process of artistic communication in which the three reasonably obvious entities, that is, the author, the work and the recipient, being either a reader, a critic, or an audience, take part in equal measure (Jauss, 1990:53). The working together among the author, the text and the reader may be referred to as Eco's (1981:256) "cooperative principle in Narrativity". Padley (2006:187) asserts that, in the 1970s, emphasis in a number of the newer types of literary criticism was transferred towards more careful attention to the role of the reader, and the process of interpretation that develops from the act of reading. Thus, the reader is considered playing an important role in the interpretative process during the act of reading (Padley, 2006:187). The interpretative process is one that clearly emerged only through a historical perspective, whereby the reader is informed by the conventions of the time, including influences that surround the reader such as social and cultural ones that help him/her in making sense of the wider world in which s/he and the text is situated in history (Padley, 2006:187-8).

Similar to the discussions by Jauss (1990) and Padley (2006), Eagleton (1983:74) argues that reception theory implies that the reader of a literary text is as important as the author. Eagleton (1983:74) states that reception theory is also known as reception aesthetics and it is the development of the study of hermeneutics in Germany. Reception theory is used to examine the role of the reader in literature (Eagleton, 1983:74). The reader performs an interpretative study of the text by making speculations and inferences about withheld or missing information (Eagleton, 1983:74).

Hence, the role of a reader can be understood not only as an interpretative activity, but as an activity performed by a reader that is influenced by existing cultural and social factors, logical expectations and conventions of the time-frame in which the text and the reader are situated (Palmer, 2004:40-1). Consequently, epistemological knowledge plays an important role in order for the reader to have the ability to interpret and provide textual meaning through the act of reading.

2.3 Cognitive science

The practices and knowledge of cognitive science develop from those of the basic contributing disciplines, which are: semiotics, system theory, communication and information theories which are applied in order to study and to have an understanding of how the brain and mind work (Margolin, 2003:271). According to Palmer (2004:44), cognitive science dates back to the 1950s. Palmer (2004:44) suggests that cognitive science is roughly used to refer to two senses, one of them being narrow, which relates to artificial intelligence and the other being broad, relating to human intelligence. Green and others (1996:5) assert that cognitive science is an “interdisciplinary scientific study of mind”. Thus, it is concerned with the activities of the brain. The “mind”, also known as mental activity or mental process, can be understood with comparison to computer software (Abrams and Harpham, 2012: 52). With this said, it is important to note that unlike a robotic reaction of a computer as an intelligent system, a human intelligent system could independently use higher rationalization capabilities to act in response (Norman, 1980:1). Abrams and Harpham (2012:52) explain cognitive science as a study that seeks to understand the working of the human brain, and explain language and other forms of communication in terms of mental states and the mental process of cognition. The main focus is on internal representations and mental constructions of content and information (Margolin, 2003:281). The brain could be understood with comparison to computer hardware, which is in contrast to the approach linking cognition to software. Hardware may be understood as the cognitive intelligent system, while the stored mental functioning, such as cognitive scripts, may be understood as software (Margolin, 2003:285; 286). Therefore, cognitive science is used to study how the human brain works in terms of knowledge of mental activities such as: memory, processing information, communicating, perception and problem solving. Consider the following example about reading. For a human being as an intelligent system to read words on a page, s/he must be able to perform the activity of reading written or printed words and thereafter determine their meaning, and this activity is called mental processing (Green & Others, 1996:5). In other words, for a human intelligent system to read, she or he must be able to retrieve the meaning of the written word from a stored mental activity. The stored mental activity must then be used later as a stored or available mental representation of the meaning of the word for a

further process of constructing the meaning of not only the word, but also the sentence and possibly of the whole text.

Similar to Abrams and Harpham (2012: 52), Matlin (2002:2) discusses cognition as a mental activity, which explains the process of attainment, storage, change and use of knowledge by any intelligent cognitive system. Matlin (2002:2) states that the cognitive mental processes include the following: reasoning, problem solving, memory, language, perception, imagery, and decision making which are applied whenever any intelligent cognitive system has to get hold of some information; and then, store the information, change it if necessary and afterwards use the information obtained. Consequently, cognitive science is a current field that attempts to answer questions about the activities of the mind using cognitive mental processes that can be understood as frames and scripts (Matlin, 2002:14). Cognitive science plays an important role for the purpose of studying a literary text because a reader can study the text under consideration from a particular frame of reference by making inferences (Herman, 2004:98). In addition, the narrative perspective can be analysed with reference to the applied character scripts (Herman, 2004:98). Frames and scripts are discussed in the next section.

2.3.1 Cognitive frames

Based on Matlin (2002:14-15), cognitive science involves a focus on the manipulation of internal representations of the external world, and internal representations are the manipulated description of how a sequence of events is expected to unfold. These internal representations can be understood as frames and scripts, because, according to Minsky (1979:1), the essence of the frame theory is that frames are remembered structures that are chosen from memory whenever one experiences a new situation. Not only in the experience of new situations, but also in recognizing what we already know. We use a frame of reference to confirm our knowledge of something or an experience. For example, we may distinguish a chair from a table because we have stored knowledge in our memory of what a chair looks like as compared to a table. Or one can make a considerable change in how one views a problem by adapting and manipulating it to fit reality, and changing details as necessary. In other words, frames are stored belief or idea structures that are used when one has to identify with a new experience, or whenever one wants to make adjustments based on the beliefs and ideas that one already has to interpret an experience or scenario.

In addition, Minsky (1979:1) states that frames are data-structures used for presenting stereotyped situations, and that these data-structures have several kinds of information attached to each one of them about how to use them, and while some of the information is about what one can expect to happen next, the other information is about what to do if the expectations are not comprehensive enough. For example, as a person going to a child's party,

you carefully select from your memory an ideal structural frame expectation of what a child's party is typically like. Your evidence for this kind of expected inference can be taken from assuming that you had received an invitation card informing you about the specific details of the event. As a result, these details narrow your expectations to match the details provided in the invitation card to a child's party and not an adult's party. Matching is described as referring to an understanding of "a process by which people match what they see and hear to pre-stored groupings of actions that they have already experienced" (Schank & Abelson, 1977:67). Similar to Schank and Abelson (1977), Minsky (1979:17) explains concept matching as an activity of frame substitution, whereby an intelligent cognitive system does not start afresh the process of evaluation but instead remembers that which has been already seen or stored; and when a new frame that shares enough terminals with the stored one is found, then some of the common assignments to the frame are retained. However, for a difficult new problem a new image structure is constructed with the application of both specific and general knowledge (Minsky, 1979:18). Consider the child's party example provided above: As you walk into the venue you start filling in details that fit into your stored frame structures. For instance, details such as the presence of the other children attending the party instead of adults. You fill in details like the music and party decorations that are more appealing to children. You also start to make necessary changes by adding new information if needed, such as when you find that at this particular party, contrary to what your stereotypical stored frame structure of a child's party predicts, there are relatively few children as compared to adults attending.

From this observation, you infer that the other adults attending are possibly relatives, and you start to apply the relevant frame to the scenario. You perform a follow-up of what happens next. Or, you simply create a new smaller sub-frame attached to the top levels of a frame if there is no matching frame for that particular scenario. Throughout the whole process, you make implicit connections. Also, you construct meaning out of pieces of information that you have attained from the scenario to concretize your own interpretation from the indeterminacies found in the scenario, in order to make the interpretation in question more determinate. You apply your cognitive ability in order to bring to the scenario pre-understandings and a context of beliefs and expectations of your stored frame structure, in which several structures of the scenario are evaluated. From this activity of evaluating the scenario you continuously shift from one perspective to another within the work in order to create assumptions, to revise beliefs and make inferences from an already developed or stored frame of reference. Minsky (1979:1) states, however, that it is possible that the proposed frame is "adapted to fit reality", that is when a terminal assignment cannot be found that is a suitable match to its terminal marker condition. In that case the network will provide a replacement frame that has information associated with the frame (Brewer, 1999:729). Minsky (1979:1) holds the following with regard to frames,

We can think of a frame as a network of nodes and relations. The “top levels” of a frame are fixed, and represent things that are always true about the supposed situation. The lower levels have many terminals – “slots” that must be filled by specific instances or data. Each terminal can specify conditions its assignment must meet (the assignments themselves are usually smaller “sub-frames”).

The following are examples taken from the two novels, Monyaise’s *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Mda’s *Black Diamond*: While Monyaise’s *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* is a 1965 text, Mda’s *Black Diamond* dates from 2009. Therefore, the two texts are written in two different time-frame structures. As a result, this leads the reader of both novels to adapt their unique data-structures to that of the respective historical contexts of the texts in question. In studying the two novels the reader has to consider both traditional and changing urban frameworks during 1965 and in 2009 respectively, including, the ideological perspectives and value-judgements that may have influenced the writers in the production of their novels. For instance, when reading a novel, factors like culture, conventions of social interaction, emotion as well as motivational issues all play a role, as discussed by Norman (1980:1). In the case of a novel like Monyaise’s, the reader must also refer to traditional Batswana cultural ideologies about Batswana women, with emphasis on traditional perspectives on Batswana women. The Batswana traditional frames will be discussed in chapter three.

Contrary to Minsky (1979:1), Bransford (1979:181) discusses frames as schemata used to explain the study of the nature of knowledge which he terms schema theory, which was mainly practiced in computer science, by building knowledge into the computer in order for the computer to perform comprehension and learning tasks. The application of schemata was to characterize human knowledge of the world. In addition, former theorists such as Minsky (1977), Charnaik (1977), Schank and Abelson (1977) use the terms frames and scripts while Bransford favours the term schemata. However, for the purpose of this study, I will use the terms frames and scripts, because unlike the term schemata the terms frames and scripts are not just about building knowledge. They include the study of how to retrieve that knowledge from points of reference, also known as frameworks that structure the specific perspective from which the knowledge is retrieved.

2.3.2 Cognitive concept

Herman (2003:10, see also Herman, 2004:97) describes scripts as stored sequential knowledge representations of events, which helps explain how cognitive systems build up complex interpretations of narratives using “incomplete” speech or textual cues. The reader is expected to fill in the gaps by making assumptions that are enabled by their experiential repertoires. For

example, when the reader reads the first subtitle of Mda's *Black Diamond* that reads as follows, "Free the Visagie Brothers", then one of the possible expectation invoked from the reader is that the narrative is about prisoners, the Visagie brothers, who are in all likelihood suspect criminals. Thus, a script is an explanation of how a series of actions is expected to unfold, and comparable to a frame, a script characterizes a set of expectations that a human intelligent system may have from prior personal experience. Frames are different from scripts in that they are used to characterize a point in time (Mercadal, 1990:255). Therefore, a script is a dynamic sequence of events involving unfolding actions in a static time frame. Herman (1997:1047) calls the sequence of events "experiential repertoires" which can be distinguished into two categories, that is, frame-like when they are static and script-like when they are dynamic. For example, Johannesburg as a setting is a static frame-like repertoire and the events of the narrative are script-like repertoires in Monyaise's novel from 1965 and Mda's from 2009. Both types of experiential repertoires are studied using previous experiences. The previous experiences are stored in the memory. They are used to form structured repertoires of expectations about current and emergent experiences. In this study both types of experiential repertoires are applied in relation to the roles of the female characters in both novels with reference to Batswana cultural traditions. A study of the stereotypical script roles of the Batswana women with regard to domestic life and the work place, finances and traditional Batswana family life, beliefs, education, marriage, legislation and leadership roles as the events unfold in the narratives of the two novels is executed.

Scripts can be understood as stored and fixed knowledge representations that are used to store groups of causally and sequentially ordered actions (Herman, 1997:1048). In addition, they can be interpreted as representations for knowledge by an intelligent cognitive system, in order to complete a specific activity (Herman, 1997:1048). In the case of a long and complicated activity the application of more than one script may be required (Herman, 1997:1048). Furthermore, Schank and Abelson (1977:38) discuss scripts as patterns of connected causal chain events used for presenting any chronological flow of events. Nevertheless, these connected causal chain events might have other steps of the chronological pattern omitted which will as a result open gaps that would then have to be filled in order to understand a particular series of events, and this act of filling in the gaps is called a script applier (Schank & Abelson, 1977:38). According to Schank and Abelson (1977:40) the function of scripts is to provide connectivity for understanding. A script can be understood as an interconnected structure with a fixed and stereotyped chain of events taking place in a specific daily context, whereby understanding is made possible by filling in gaps. For example, in Mda's *Black Diamond* (2009:9), the utterance "I'll call Nomsa to give you a ride", represents a ride script which may be understood in association with the previous story lines of the narrative about Tumi wanting to go to the gym and asking Don to take her there, and Don suggesting that Tumi must rather catch a ride with

Nomsa, because he has to work overtime. From Don's statement the reader can understand by inference of an applied script that Nomsa has a car, and that she is a licensed public road user, and from this inference a driver script is activated from the reader's memory. Schank and Abelson (1977:46) state that script application is the activity of causing scripts to operate through script headers.

In the example provided above, the header for the ride script is a concept that has to do with the need to travel from one destination to another - transportation in the plan of getting transported. But, Schank and Abelson (1977:46) warn that the restriction of obvious contexts must be practiced to avoid calling up, in the case of the example of the ride script above, the ride script for each and every sentence that uses the word 'ride', because even in the instance where a proper header is encountered it might not necessarily be appropriate for the reader to immediately call up the details that fit to that particular ride script. It is important to note that some script references can lead to a script being brief, resulting in an inappropriate call up of the detail that does not entirely fit the particular required script.

Schank and Abelson (1977:47) state that for a script to be non-fleeting, it needs the occurrence of its two lines, that is, a header and one other line from which a request can be called up in order to connect "possible inputs with events within the script". Schank and Abelson (1977:48) discuss *four types* of headers, which are categorized according to how strongly the headers predict that the connected context will in fact be instantiated. According to Schank and Abelson (1977:49) the categories are as follows: the first category of headers is the Prediction Header (PH) since it activates the script reference based on a main script prediction that is being mentioned in the text; and in their discussion Schank and Abelson (1977:49) provide an example of the sentence 'John was hungry' as a Prediction Header for the restaurant script.

The second category is the Instrumental Header (IH), which usually comes up in inputs, which refers to two or more contexts from which the least of them all can be understood as 'instrumental' for the others. After the input is found, the script is then instantiated, which is identified as the making of the copy of that particular script's details, with slots that are filled by the known properties of that particular story in which the role references are concretized. Therefore, Schank and Abelson (1977:48) declare that there are rules for working with instantiated scripts that are directly related to the numbers of steps that are left out.

According to Schank and Abelson (1977:48) basically the instantiated scripts are the ones that clarify or specify steps in the script itself, which then leads the reader to fill in the surrounding steps that ought to be explicitly inferred and treat them as if they were assumed. Schank and Abelson (1977:49) state that the purpose of scripts is to make available the background whereby "more planful activities are carried out". The third and most predictive category is the

Locale Header (LH) in which several situations are recognized as having a 'residence', which can be a place or a building where they typically take place. The Local Header has to do with the location or setting in the story.

For example, the setting of the two novels, *Black Diamond* (2009) and *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* (1965), which is Johannesburg, signals a stereotypically fast city, and modern lifestyle script. However, according to Schank and Abelson (1977:51) a Locale Header can have interferences and distractions, and the following example is provided: "[t]he delivery man brought fifteen boxes of doughnuts to the restaurant. He went inside and spoke to the manager". From the example provided above, although the local header of a restaurant triggers the restaurant script, the reader cannot really predict that the delivery man will eat or order something to eat from that restaurant, and even though he might, another separate Header might have to be activated in order to fit the restaurant script (Schank & Abelson, 1977:50). The Locale Header Johannesburg is therefore recognized as the typical location where the events of both narratives take place, such as events at the Baragwanath Hospital in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and the industrial hub of Johannesburg in *Black Diamond*. Any other inference or distraction will result in uncertainty of the reader's predictions of the narrative events.

The reason for the uncertainty of the reader's prediction with regard to the delivery-man-in-restaurant example above is that there are two scripts operating in this scenario, the first one is the delivery script and the second one is the restaurant script. In the scenario provided above, the script that is more likely to be applied by a reader is the delivery script, while the restaurant script can be a subpart of a larger script with the exception that a reader then keeps open expectations for subsequent calls for the restaurant script, in case the delivery man decides to sit in the restaurant to order (Schank & Abelson, 1977:50). In this case, the reader must be prepared to start the full restaurant script that has been suppressed by a context of the delivery script. Schank and Abelson (1977:50) refer to the fourth header as the Internal Conceptualization Header, whereby "any conceptualization or role from the script" possibly occurs in a text. Such headers are associated with particular roles, which might be applied in and away from the role. For instance, waitress is one such role where the header may be conceptualized with the locale, that is a waitress in a restaurant, and away as when referring to description information, such as my friend is a waitress (Schank & Abelson, 1977:50).

Scripts, based on Schank and Abelson (1977:57), can be characterized as interactive, whereby they have more than one way in which several scripts can be activated at once, and when two scripts are activated at the same time they compete for received items of information. Schank and Abelson (1977:61) state that there are different types of scripts. The first one is a situational script in which the situation is specified with numerous players having connecting roles that they

follow, and they share an understanding of what is supposed to happen. The second one is a personal script that differs from the situational script in that it does not operate in the schematic style of situational scripts. In a personal script, all the participants are not essentially aware of their participation, because their personal scripts exist only in their minds as main actors. The personal script is made up of a series of possible actions that lead to a desired goal and unlike a plan, a personal script has no planning involved for the actor in such a script, because the participant has repeatedly participated in that particular script. Schank and Abelson (1977:63) state that personal scripts are typically but not always goal-oriented, for instance, eating to stop the experience of hunger.

Moreover, personal scripts have a tendency to be applied as a ritual in the instance of meditating, or as a complicated emotional and behavioural response following a situational outcome. Personal scripts usually in new circumstances are limited to a participant's most common and readily inferred type with no other scripts around. For example, Sithole in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* (1965:64) goes on a journey to find Stella who has been abducted by two unknown men. He approaches a vendor woman to ask her about the two unknown men in order to trace Stella. As a police officer, he may have previously participated in an investigative script of interrogating suspect criminals; however, he applies that common and readily available script to the new situation of encountering the vendor to attain his desired goal of finding Stella.

The third type of script that Schank and Abelson (1977:65) identify is the instrumental script that they state is to a certain extent like situational scripts in structure. This type of script illustrates fixed series of actions. Although the kinds of actions it describes, including the variability of the ordering and the use of the script in understanding, are different.

For Schank and Abelson (1977:65), starting a car is one of the examples of an instrumental script. Instrumental scripts have little variability, because the order of their events is very rigid requiring that each step of the events be performed. There are important distinctions between instrumental and situational scripts with regard to the number of actors participating, and the general intention or goal of the script; because, typically, situational scripts take multiple actors, while instrumental scripts have only one participant. In addition, certain events can take place in a situational script that is not expected and is frequently the point of any story that triggers situational scripts. For example, "a fight in a restaurant is of interest because of its unusualness" (Schank and Abelson, 1977:65).

The other important aspects about instrumental scripts is that, since the actions of the instrumental scripts are rigid, almost the only thing that can be connected within it is the failure of the intended goal and what was completed to correct or understand the script. According to

Schank and Abelson (1977:67) the nature of the understanding process is called a script-based understanding, which they explain as follows,

In order to understand the actions that are going on in a given situation, a person must have been in that situation before. That is, understanding is knowledge-based. The actions of others make sense only in so far as they are part of a stored pattern of actions that have been previously experienced.

Thus, intelligent cognitive systems need significant specific or general knowledge for the purpose of understanding, from which scripts are then applied in order to account for the specific knowledge that an intelligent cognitive system has. For the most part understanding is script-based. Hence, understanding is a course of action by which “people match what they see and hear to pre-stored groupings of actions that they have already experienced” (Schank and Abelson, 1977:67), thereby understanding new information in the light of the old or stored information.

The study of cognitive frames and scripts seems to have a connection with narrative poetics in that both literary approaches have to do with an acquiring and telling of knowledge as seen or heard from a particular point of view by a cognitive intelligent system, which leads to the discussion of the term narrative in the following section.

2.4 Narrative

2.4.1 Discussion

Hayden White (1987:215) pointed out that the word “narrative” goes back to the ancient Sanskrit “gna”. The word “gna” is a root term that means know, and it is derived from Latin words for both knowing “gnarus” and telling “naro” (White, 1987:215). The etymological meaning of the terms have a dual meaning of narrative as a universal device used to know and tell, to absorb knowledge and express it and this is where frames and scripts come in handy, as they help retrieve the relevant knowledge (Abbott, 2002:11). Abbott (2007:50) explains narrative as an invitation extended to the reader to fill in the gaps of the events that are taking place in the storyworld by using, that which is given through cues that are available in the narrative (Abbott, 2007:45; 50). Gaps are all the details that the narrative does not make mention of, that the reader has to fill in order to make sense of the narratives s/he reads or sees by using the narrative discourse as guidance (Iser, 1978:170-79; Palmer, 2004:47). However, this makes overreading unavoidable because narratives by their nature are riddled with gaps, but the reader can apply intentional interpretation to avoid the extremes of underreading or overreading

(Abbott, 2002:83; see also Boulter, 2007:33; 69-70). Experience or cognitive skills help with filling gaps by inferring and using what the reader knows or imagines by retrieving it from stored cognitive scripts in order to make the fillings (Abbott, 2002:84). Filling gaps is one of the reader's contributions to the narrative, which may be the application of the reception theory (Cobley, 2001:12).

Herman (2003:2) describes narrative as universal and polyfunctional, whereby there is an association with regard to the same story being told in one specific social group and another for different purposes. Thus, everywhere in the world stories are being told, and they possibly share the same narrative traits with the only difference being how they are uniquely told by members of different social groups. According to Margolin (2003:284) stories are told through verbal presentations of events that happen over time, with particular focus on the effect that physical events have on the changes of conditions. Margolin's description emphasises actions that characters perform in the course of time, which as a result have an effect on their surroundings. Consequently, a successful interpretation of a narrative involves an interconnection of epistemological activities as a collectively construed archetype for knowledge (Herman, 2003:2).

Consider the following example taken from Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* where Stella is attacked by an unidentified assailant at a job related function: "O ne a inamologa fa motho a mo kanamisa ka letswele; le gale a bona gore maoto ke a mosadi" (She was just rising when a person knocked her flat with a fist, but then she saw that the legs were a woman's – my translation - PNQ) (Monyaise, 1965:8). From this example an event seems to be the key indicator of what makes a narrative what it is, differentiating it from a description, an exposition, an argument, a lyric or a combination of these or something else.

Narrative knowledge is changeable, and is a device that stimulates active thinking and helps an intelligent cognitive system to obtain cognizant information about how to approach incidents as the narrator is telling them, or heard by the audience or reader (Abbott, 2002:11). The narrator is a device or a creation used by the author (Abbott, 2002:63). It is important to note that narrative can be used to deliver false (Keen, 2003:2) and misleading information (Abbott, 2002:11). Moreover, it is important to note that it is not compulsory for narrative events to run consecutively or to be causally related (Boulter, 2007:39-40).

Consider *Tristram Shandy* (1991) by Laurence Sterne. The sequences of events that unfold are the actions that tell the reader what happens in the story (Abbott, 2002:125). In some narratives the revelation of the complete sequence may be postponed until towards the very end of the narrative (Abbott, 2002:125), while, in some narratives, all the links in the actions that take place may disappointingly not be exposed to the reader (Abbott, 2002:125). Usually, readers of

narrative texts look for causation in the story for the sake of normalizing the story (Abbot, 2002:40; see also Herman, 2004:98). That is, establishing links to make sense of what is happening by constructing a narrative coherence by means of bringing together a collection of events.

Furthermore, actions may not necessarily be the result of a causal link between the actions of a narrative; of course linearity can make a narrative powerful and gratifying to the human need for order (Abbott, 2002:38). However, if causation can make narrative a gratifying experience, “it can also make it a treacherous one, since it implicitly draws on an ancient fallacy that things that follow other things are caused by those things” (Abbott, 2002:38-39), which is not always the case.

2.5 Major narrative aspects

2.5.1 Narrative and time

Narrative is the primary way in which our species organizes and expresses its understanding of organized approximate time indicated through narrative discourse and the events that take place (Abbot, 2002:3). For example, *I read Shakespeare’s plays*, is a statement that in terms of time is a rough indication of when I performed the activity of reading the plays, which Paul Ricoeur calls “human time” (Abbott, 2002:4). As a result, narrative is a portrayal of the features of temporal existence (Abbott, 2002:4). Thus, the manner in which one interprets a narrative can be with consideration to the events connected to that particular narrative, or the events that were taking place at the time the story was created, which has an influence on the way the reader may interpret a narrative in the present time of the story or the time preceding it.

2.5.2 Narrative and focalization

2.5.2.1 Focalization

Focalization serves a useful purpose and it is a less vague and disputed term than point of view (Palmer, 2004:48; Bal, 1997:142). It specifically refers to the point of view or lens through which an audience sees characters and events in the narrative and the agent who speaks (Margolin, 2003:282). Similar to Margolin’s (2003:282) definition, Prince (1987:31) explains focalization as,

The perspective in terms of which the narrated situations and events are presented; the perceptual or conceptual position in terms of which they are rendered.

According to Palmer (1994:48) at times an agent may see and speak at the same time, or at times the agent who speaks is different from the one who sees, or zero focalization may occur where events are not focalized through any other voice except the narrator's.

Normally, the narrator is our *focalizer*, s/he is the one whose voice we hear, and we see the action through his/her eyes in this way, the reader's attention and reception of the narrative is manipulated (Abbott, 2002:66). But this is not by any means always the case (Abbott, 2002:66). The thought and emotions of the naratee may be largely influenced by the voice of the chosen focalizer, which either can be a character positioned in the narrative also known as the internal focalizer or outside of it (Abbott, 2002:67). Depending on the type of the focalizing narrator chosen, his/her focalization can take us anywhere, but also provides a selective focalization, as when the focalizer renders only external focalization of the external behaviour of the characters excluding their thoughts based on the narrator's perception and distance to the story (Palmer, 2004:48).

2.5.2.2 Narrative perception and distance

2.5.2.2.1 Distance

Distance is the extent of the narrator's contribution in the story; it refers to the degree of involvement in the narrative s/he tells, which has an influence on the reader's evaluation of the information received from the narrator (Abbott, 2002:67). The information can be about the narrative in progress, or the narrative about the narrator's life or the narrative of the life of others (Abbott, 2002:67). The level of involvement of the narrator may be indicated by his/her narrative perception, which is discussed in the next section.

2.5.2.2.2 Narrative perception

According to Abbott (2002:6) narrative has much to do with our observation and understanding of the world in time that is virtually built in to the way we see. For example, a story in a book or painting may be perceived in the epistemological and historical time frame of the story itself, of the author or the reader (Abbott, 2002:6). One's understanding of narrative helps one to understand what one sees, called narrative perception, and to determine the possible meaning of the narrative (Abbott, 2002:11). Narrative increases our understanding of the narrative time outline, as a result, "our narrative perception stands ready to be activated in order to give us a frame or context for even the static and uneventful scenes" (Abbott, 2002:11).

2.5.3 Technical terms

2.5.3.1 Diegesis

Prince (1987:20) distinguishes between two meanings of the term diegesis. The first one is: telling as in narrating a story as opposed to showing by acting it. The second one is the story-world in which the recounted state of affairs and actions take place. The term in essence refers to the reality of the story world in which the events are supposed to take place (Abbott, 2002:68).

2.5.3.2 Homodiegetic and heterodiegetic narrators

By a homodiegetic narrator it is meant a character that is a participator in the story world and is a narrator, while a heterodiegetic narrator is a voice situated outside the action and the story world (Genette, 1980:212-62).

2.5.3.3 Reliability

Reliability has to do with the dependability of the narrator's rendering of an accurate account of the narrative details, which builds a trust relationship between the narrator and the reader (Abbott, 2002:69). It is possible to trust unreliable narrators, not for their interpretation but for the facts, and then there are those we cannot even trust for the facts (Cohn, 1978).

2.5.3.4 Voice

Voice has to do with "who it is we 'hear' doing the narrating" (Abbott, 2002:64). It could be the homodiegetic narrator; heterodiegetic from a first-person's or, second person's or, third-person's or, omniscient perspective (Abbott, 2002:64). It is whose voice colours the story it narrates (Abbott, 2002:65). Consequently, narrative voice is a most important element in the structuring of a narrative (Abbott, 2007:65). Therefore, it is crucial to determine the kind of narrator as soon as possible, because this will aid the audience's knowledge about how the narrator injects into the narration his or her own thoughts, emotions and limitations, as well as his or her trustworthiness with regard to the information she or he is providing (Herman, 2003:273), which is realized from the narrative order and pace.

2.5.4 Narrative, order and pace

Narrative does not always take a chronological order, as seen in Freytag's pyramid (Boulter, 2007:39-40; Porter, 1993:58). Actions of a narrative may start from the middle or the end of the story depending on how the author structures his or her plot. For instance, *Maru* by Bessie Head (1971) provides an example of a jumbled order of events in a story. Pace is the speed of

the accelerations, decelerations, and pauses of the narrative events in the story that develop to a potential conflict (Porter, 1993:63).

2.5.4.1 Conflict

According to Abbott (2002:51) conflict is one of the elements that structure a narrative. It is the opposition that takes place in a narrative. It is not necessarily the arrangement of a clear opposition between good and bad characters (Abbott, 2002:51). Moreover, a narrative may have more than one conflict happening (Abbott, 2002:51).

2.5.4.2 Components of narrative pace

2.5.4.2.1 Closure

Closure is when an opposition in a narrative is resolved. When expectations are fulfilled or questions answered, we say that closure has taken place, which usually happens at the end of the narrative (Abbott, 2002:52). Abbott (2002:52) asserts that we expect stories to end, and can take an end of a narrative as good or bad, satisfying or unsatisfying. However, it is important to note that closure and the ending to a narrative can be discrete (Abbott, 2002:52). Also, narrative pace may help to determine the time the narrative will take before it reaches closure by using suspense and surprise as components of the narrative pace (Abbott, 2002:53).

2.5.4.2.2 Suspense

Suspense is a delayed closure or lack of it, “a state of imbalance or tension that precedes closure” (Abbott, 2002:53). Suspense gives narrative life, and it also gives life to expectations through diversions, violation, detours and digressions (Cobley, 2001:12).

2.5.4.2.3 Surprise

Surprise is when the narrative does not provide us with the results that meet our expectations, for example when a narrative does not close (Abbott, 2002:53).

Usually, there are two important levels at which suspense and closure occurs in narrative: the level of expectations and the level of questions (Abbott, 2002:54).

2.5.4.2.4 Closure and the level of expectations

The level of expectations is when the reader recognizes the kind of plot or action taking place, through several signals that indicate whether the narrative is romance, revenge, murder, an escape, or a bad dream (Abbott, 2002:54). The manner in which the action of the narrative starts, influences the reader’s expectation tracks or what, in cognitive poetics, will be cognitive

scripts about the actions that follow to be consistent with the overall code (Abbott, 2002:54). For example, when an orphaned young woman experiencing unfair oppression like Cinderella meets a young prince, we expect falling in love to follow and the closure to the narrative to be a happy marriage and victorious reward (Abbott, 2002:54).

2.5.4.2.5 Closure and the level of questions

At this level the reader anticipates and asks questions that lead him/her to find answers to those questions (Abbott, 2002:57). However, sometimes the answers may be partial or imprecise responses to the question asked, which may be another kind of suspense technique, as the thread of information and disinformation keeps the reader interested, until the narrative provides the answers and closure is reached (Abbott, 2002:57). For example, in Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* the reader may ask questions such as the following, how did Diarona get infected with TB? Who is the unidentified female attacker who attacked Stella at the work related function? Who are the unidentified two men who attacked Stella and Pule, and abducted Stella on their way to the cinema? Who hired them? Answers to these questions lead to the closure of the narrative (Abbott, 2002:57). However, it is possible that there may be an absence of closure in a narrative, even though the narrative reaches an end, which as a result makes closure to be not compulsory in a narrative (Abbott, 2002:57).

2.5.5 Narrative and Mode (Manner of representation)

A narrative can be presented by a narrator, through painting, by an actor on stage or set or by some other means of focalizing (Porter, 1993:66-67). In other words, narrative mode is the manner in which the telling is done. There are Aristotelian distinctions between representation and presentation, with "presentation" being used for narratives that are acted (Boulter, 2007:41). For example, in theatre we experience a narrative as immediately presented, while representation has a lot to do with narratives that are told or written, which is an account of existing events (Boulter, 2007:41). A narrative discourse is the language that is more common to narrative than it is to ordinary language that the narrator uses to convey the represented events, the depth of the character by narrating both physical and abstract actions, such as the character's thoughts or feelings (Abbott, 2002: 13; 16 and 22). The manner of presentation may also be done through the way the narrator freely presents the narrative discourse through some characters, using free indirect voice, stream of consciousness, interior monologue and a narrative framing presentation (Porter, 1993:68-69).

2.5.5.1 Narrative framing

A narrative is framed when it is being embedded in another narrative, and the one that contains the embedded narrative is called a framing narrative (Abbott, 2002:25). It can also be understood as an “embracing narrative [which] acts as a framework within which a multitude of tales are told” (Abbott, 2002:25). The framing or embracing narrative plays an important role in the decoding of the meaning of the narratives they frame (Abbott, 2002:25; 26). The following is Abbott’s (2002:26) explanation of framing and the effect of framing narratives,

This general approach examines the interaction between audience and text in terms of the models of understanding, or frames of reference, that the audiences bring with them. It examines the ways in which narrative texts gratify, frustrate, or in other ways play with these cognitive structures by which we make sense of the world.

However, embedded narratives can stand alone, interpreted outside the framing narrative, or without making interpretive connections with the framing narrative (Abbott, 2002:26). Moreover, if the embedded narrative were to be separated from the framing narrative then the action of separation would make a considerable change about them and will require the reader to fill in gaps (Abbott, 2002:26).

2.6 Characterization

Characterization is a device in a dramatic or narrative work of art (Abrams & Harpham, 2012:45-46). Characters present to us their qualities and actions, such as: their intentions, their strength and weakness, their trustworthiness, and capacity to feel different emotions (Abbott, 2002:124; see also Prince, 1982:124) through what they are doing and what they and other characters are saying. Characters are the action agents and they help to drive the action in the story (Boulter, 2007:136).

Character and characterization might be used in narratives to develop and inform real human relationships, whereby life appears to be mimicking art (Boulter, 2007:137). In addition, according to Boulter (2007:138-39) the way writers portray characters may influence the reader to,

... respond to the cultural expectations of our time, to the prevailing ideas about humanity and identity in life and art (even if we are doing so unconsciously).

In the quotation above one sees how the reader can make connections of a narrative and the contextual time frame of their time and that of the narrative to influence their expectations while interpreting a narrative.

Characterization may change from an inference of an individual action to a supposed disposition quality over time (Boulter, 2007:139), which usually is common in the portrayal of round characters, which leads us to the discussion about round and flat characterization.

2.6.1 Flat and round characters

A distinction can be drawn between two types of characters. A flat character, also termed a type or two-dimensional character, is predictable and created around a single idea or quality without much individualizing details (Boulter, 2007:138-139). The term flat character was introduced by E.M. Foster to refer to characters that have predictable behaviour, that possess no hidden complexity and lack depth (Foster, 1927:93-94; 98). As a result, flat characters do not require the filling of mysterious gaps. According to Foster (1927:100) flat characters are often portrayed in satire, comedy and melodrama. Such characters represent a reduction of human qualities to the mechanical, because these types of characters seem to exist on the surface of the story, on the same level as objects and machines (Foster, 1927:100).

Forster's counter term to flat characters is round characters (Boulter, 2007:138-39). Round characters have varying degrees of depth and complexity; and they are interesting and surprising (Boulter, 2007:138-39). A round character is complex in motivation and nature and is represented with subtle particularity (Abbott, 2002:127). A reader does not usually see inside a character; except by inference from the narrative provided by the focalizer (Abbott, 2002:126).

2.6.2 Types

Abbott (2002:45) describes a type as a recurring type of character, which is often a staple for masterplots, and he provides the example of Cinderella as both a type personified in the character of Cinderella and in the masterplot, which is the narrative. A type character that does not become personified is called a stereotype, which Abbott describes as a static and unsurprising character that gives the reader the impression that the character is prefabricated (Abbott, 2002:45).

A stereotypical character is more likely to be a flat character, because it is not dynamic and it is predictable to the reader (Abbott, 2002:131). The following examples are some of the typical stereotype characters across different cultures and subcultures: the strong mother, the strict father, the rebellious teenager, the orphan, the nerd, the hypocrite or cheat, the Good Samaritan, or the prostitute with a heart of gold (Abbott, 2002:129). However, it is not only

characters that can be stereotyped; masterplots can also be rendered stereotypically (Abbott, 2002:45). For instance, this happens when all the reader can see is the masterplot, whereby the actual narrative in which the sequence of events is narrated brings little of interest to the story (Abbott, 2002:45).

2.6.3 Characterization through naming

Character naming may add to the reader's understanding of a character's uniqueness (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001:82). Naming in the Batswana culture is an important custom, because in the Batswana community it is popular belief that part of an individual's identity and association with the race is through naming.

Traditionally, in the Batswana culture an individual will be named after a significant hero, or as a symbol representing future events (Hofstede, 1991:5-10), or after an incident that took place during the process when the individual was conceived and throughout until his/her birth. For example, the name Bokamoso (Future) is a symbolic name for a brighter or better future for the family or the individual, with the hope that the named individual will live up to his/her name and make a difference by setting the past generational wrongs right.

The Batswana cultural belief is that the choice of a specific name for an individual should be a wise and good one as the name may influence the individual's behaviour, because there is a saying by Seboni (1962:102) that "Ina lebe seromo" which Dlavane (2007:47) translates as follows, "a bad name is an evil omen". As a result, the Batswana people often avoid negative names like Matlakala (Garbage), Mmolai (Murder) and Dikeleldi (Tears). Consequently, naming and the manner in which it is applied in literature play an important role in revealing characters to the reader.

The name that a character is given may help to attribute the character's traits. Most of the names in Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Mda's *Black Diamond* may be classified as attributive family names. For example, Tumi in Mda's *Black Diamond* has qualities that are related to her name, which is a short cut for Boitumelo (Joy) or Keitumetse (I am joyful) because she is characterized as a bubbly character; Diarona in Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* qualifies the character Diarona (to act objectionably) who is experiencing unpleasant events and is acting objectionably against her experiences.

2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter an explanation of the theoretical framework and definitions of crucial key terms has been provided, for the purpose of applying them in the comparative study

of perspectives on female characters in D.P.S. Monyaise's *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Zakes Mda's *Black Diamond*.

The application of the postclassical approach is that of continuously shifting from one perspective to another within the work in order to create assumptions, to revise beliefs and make inferences from an already developed or stored frame of reference. Moreover, the reader as an intelligent cognitive system uses knowledge to interpret the work of art from a specific perspective, using scripts in order to provide connectivity for understanding. A script can be understood as an interconnected structure with a fixed and stereotyped chain of events taking place in a specific daily context, whereby understanding is made possible by filling in gaps.

It is evident that frames and scripts are elements of cognitive science, and they have their similarities and differences. They are both stored data-structures used for presenting stereotyped situations, while frames are different from scripts in that they are used to characterize a point in time; scripts are a dynamic sequence of events involving unfolding actions in a static time frame. The application of cognitive scripts and frames assist the academic reader in constructing a more informed and comprehensive interpretation of narrative text. Writers invite the reader to make inferences and fill in the gaps using available cues with reference to narrative aspects. The reader actively responds to the narrative using his/her informed conventions and ideological influences to interpret and make sense of the storyworld in relation to the wider world in which s/he, including the narrative text, is historically situated. Characters, as action agents, cannot be summarized in a single phrase and may be featured in different types. They have the ability of surprising the reader in a convincing manner and they are subject to change.

With this theoretical background of frames and scripts a comparative analysis of the portrayal of female characters will be conducted in chapter four, in order to discover instances where female characters are portrayed in terms of their perceived behaviour. The next chapter provides background with regard to traditional Batswana cultural ideologies about Batswana women, with emphasis on stereotypical perspectives on female characters identified through the application of theoretical insights with regard to frames and scripts.

CHAPTER 3: CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter an exploration of cultural ideologies relating to the Batswana women is conducted. This chapter intends to explain stereotypical ideological perspectives with specific attention to the context of traditional Batswana culture, and not necessarily to debate the finer points of feminist theory. The traditional cultural views concerning Batswana women are discussed in this chapter with emphasis on stereotypical perspectives. Firstly, the traditional view on Batswana women is contextualized. Secondly, a brief definition of culture is provided. Thirdly, the general stereotypical perspectives of Batswana culture are linked to Batswana women and the workplace, Batswana family life, finances, legislation, leadership roles, education, religious beliefs and traditional marriage. Lastly, concluding remarks are provided.

3.2 Contextualization of traditional perspectives on Batswana women

There are evident changes relating to perspectives on women and their position in the wider world, in South Africa as a country, in Batswana society and at the level of each individual's world as citizens of South Africa. Moreover, since the Batswana do not exist in isolation, cultural perspectives on Batswana women are discussed in relation to those pertaining to other social groups to elaborate additional cultural developments. Further examples will be provided from Monyaise and other Setswana literary texts in order to support the research argument and to provide more insight regarding the cultural perspectives on specifically Batswana women in relation to women of other ethnic groups. For the purpose of this study the term female is inclusively used to refer to women and girls, and the term culture to mean the lifestyle, cultural practices and values of the Batswana people collectively, including their closest family groups such as the Basotho and the Bapedi in relation to other black racial groups with regards to the context of the stereotypical cultural views on women.

Contemporary available data on the development of the Batswana culture are scarce. It amounts to little more than a general account of the Batswana population. This information does not touch upon matters of a more specific nature. The 2011 Census Statistics Release and the South African survey 2012 provide general data with regard to the South African population as a whole distinguishing between male and female categories from the nine provinces. One should also take into account that Batswana culture is changing, as it does not exist in isolation. Besides, the remaining problem is that writers such as Monyaise hold on to traditional narrative frames and scripts that are no longer conducive to modern ways of living, and their writing is testimony to that. As a result, the discussion of the cultural background in this chapter is

conducted in a manner that aims to show the complex interplay between the more general developments at the national level and the gender classification level, because researchers neglect to provide a clear indication of geographical background and origin.

The Batswana relate to the new South African reality in complex ways. While retaining traditional elements, this community is part and parcel of the South African nation as a whole (Becker, 1971:6). In this sense, most ethnic communities in South Africa are in a similar position as the Batswana. The Basotho and Bapedi in terms of tradition share similar cultural views and practices, but an exploration of this falls outside the scope of this study. Cultural practices such as those relating to the strict exclusion of women and children from the kgotla, cleansing rituals and initiation schools are not exclusively present in the Batswana community. They are also practiced within the other ethnic groups related to the Batswana. Schapera (1934:4) asserts that the Bantu groupings result from a division of a large social group into separated smaller tribal clusters. The smaller divisions basically share similar cultural traditions with slight differences in historical details, dialect, organizational and belief aspects.

The Bantu tribes are geographically distributed based on their cultural customs, which are the South-eastern and South-central divisions (Schapera, 1934:4). The South-eastern group is categorised into the Nguni (Zulu and Xhosa) and the Thonga (Bathonga) groups. The South-central division is classified into the Venda (Bavenda) and Sotho (Western Sotho also known as Batswana, the Northern or Transvaal Sotho also known as Bapedi and the Southern Sotho also known as Basotho) (Schapera, 1934:4).

A discussion of the general traditional stereotypical perspectives of the Batswana culture with reference to Hofstede's theory about levels of culture is provided in relation to the Bantu tribes. Hofstede's theory is an important point of reference in this discussion, because it caters for the general cultural stereotypical perspectives on Batswana women.

3.3 Definition of culture

Hofstede (1991:4) describes culture as different thoughts, feelings and actions from individuals who associate themselves with an existing group of people within a specific nation. Related to Hofstede's explanation of culture, Mogapi (1992:1) states that culture is a way of showing people's thoughts; it directs how they behave amongst each other and around people from other cultures, and it is a unifying aspect with regard to the way people live and their general understanding of life. Alasuutari's (1995:25) definition of culture does not differ much from Mogapi's, as he states: "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". Thus, the way the Batswana community live, their language, customs, art and creations, beliefs

and history as a community, as well as some features closely associated with the Batswana such as showing emotions, are all part of who they are. Culture in Setswana is known as *setso*, which Merafe (1993:31) describes as follows:

Lefoko le, setso le raya selo sa kwa o tswang teng, ke gore selo sa botswabatho.

(This word culture means something of origin, in other words something related to people's origin) (My translation - NPQ).

The origin of the Batswana is also part of their cultural background. Hofstede (1991:4), as does Mogapi, describes culture as having a structure that can serve as a basis for mutual understanding. According to Hofstede (1991:4) the cultural structure has patterns, also known as mental programs, which use mental software to operate. He categorizes culture into two facets, namely "culture one" and "culture two" (Hofstede, 1991:5). Culture one according to Hofstede is narrow and more applicable to individuals, because it relates to the development or modification of the mental software through education, art and literature (Hofstede, 1991:5). Culture two refers to a shared feature, which is scientifically identifiable and normally used by social anthropologists throughout the world in their analysis of relatively different social groups and their philosophies (Hofstede 1991:5). Culture two is at least partly shared by people of the same origin, while culture one is practised by individuals from different backgrounds (Hofstede, 1991:5). Moreover, culture two is a good example of all the fundamental everyday human processes and mental activities, such as thinking, feeling, acting and showing or not showing emotions (Hofstede, 1991:5).

The mental programs are much like the cognitive mental activities also known as frames and scripts (Hofstede, 1991:4). Similar to Hofstede's cultural mental programs, cognitive mental activities are also learned throughout an individual's lifetime with most of them internalised during early childhood, and are influenced by the individual's life experience and the social environment in which s/he grew up (Hofstede, 1991:4). They start to be learned within the family structure, and then continue to be instilled in the neighbourhood, in school, youth groups and communities, working environments and by the mass media (Hofstede, 1991:4).

In addition, other similarities between cultural mental programs and cognitive mental activities is that they are both learned cognitive patterns; cultural mental programs like cognitive mental activities also have to be first recognized by an intelligent system in order for the relevant cognitive pattern to be retrieved, or adjusted from a stored mental activity and program for usage (Schank & Abelson, 1977:67). In the case where there is no matching relevant mental program, a new one can be created (Schank & Abelson, 1977:67).

A brief discussion of the characteristics of culture is assumed for the purpose of presenting an orientation with regard to the concept culture.

3.3.1 Characteristics of culture

Hofstede (1991:10) speaks about different layers that correspond to different levels of culture. These are, the national level, the regional or ethnic or religious and/or linguistic affiliation level, the gender level, the generational level, the social class level and the organizational or corporate level. According to Hofstede (1991:10), the various levels of mental programs are not necessarily in harmony, because human beings practise them on the personal and universal levels. Hofstede (1991:5) states that, “culture should be distinguished from human nature on one side and from an individual’s personality on the other”, and he illustrates his statement in a diagram with three levels of uniqueness in human mental programming,

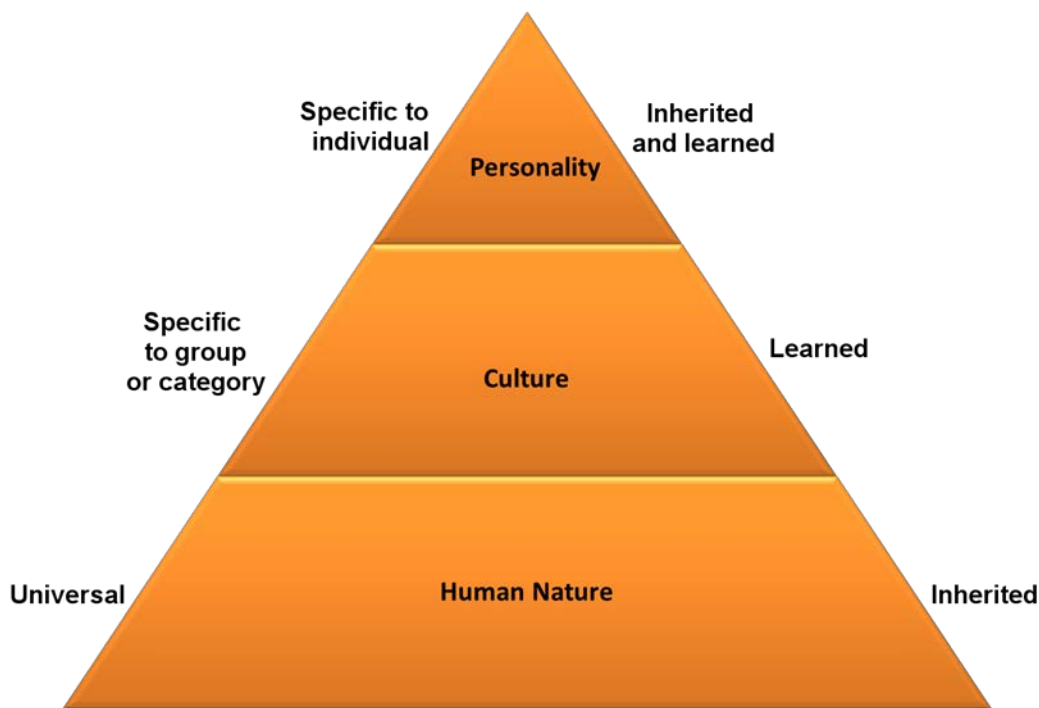


Figure 1: Hofstede’s three levels of uniqueness in human mental programming

From the above diagram an individual’s inherited and learned personality is exclusive to his or her particular set of mental programs, which she or he does not share with anyone else (Hofstede, 1991:6). According to Hofstede (1991: 6) the set of mental programs include qualities that are partially inherited genetically and partially learned through cultural modification and individual experience. Human nature, on the other hand, is common to all human beings (Hofstede, 1991:5). Hofstede (1991:5) asserts that human nature is genetically inherited and it

is analogous to the computer 'operating system' that defines the individual's physical and basic psychological functioning, such as: the human ability to feel different emotions, experience the need to associate with others, to play and exercise.

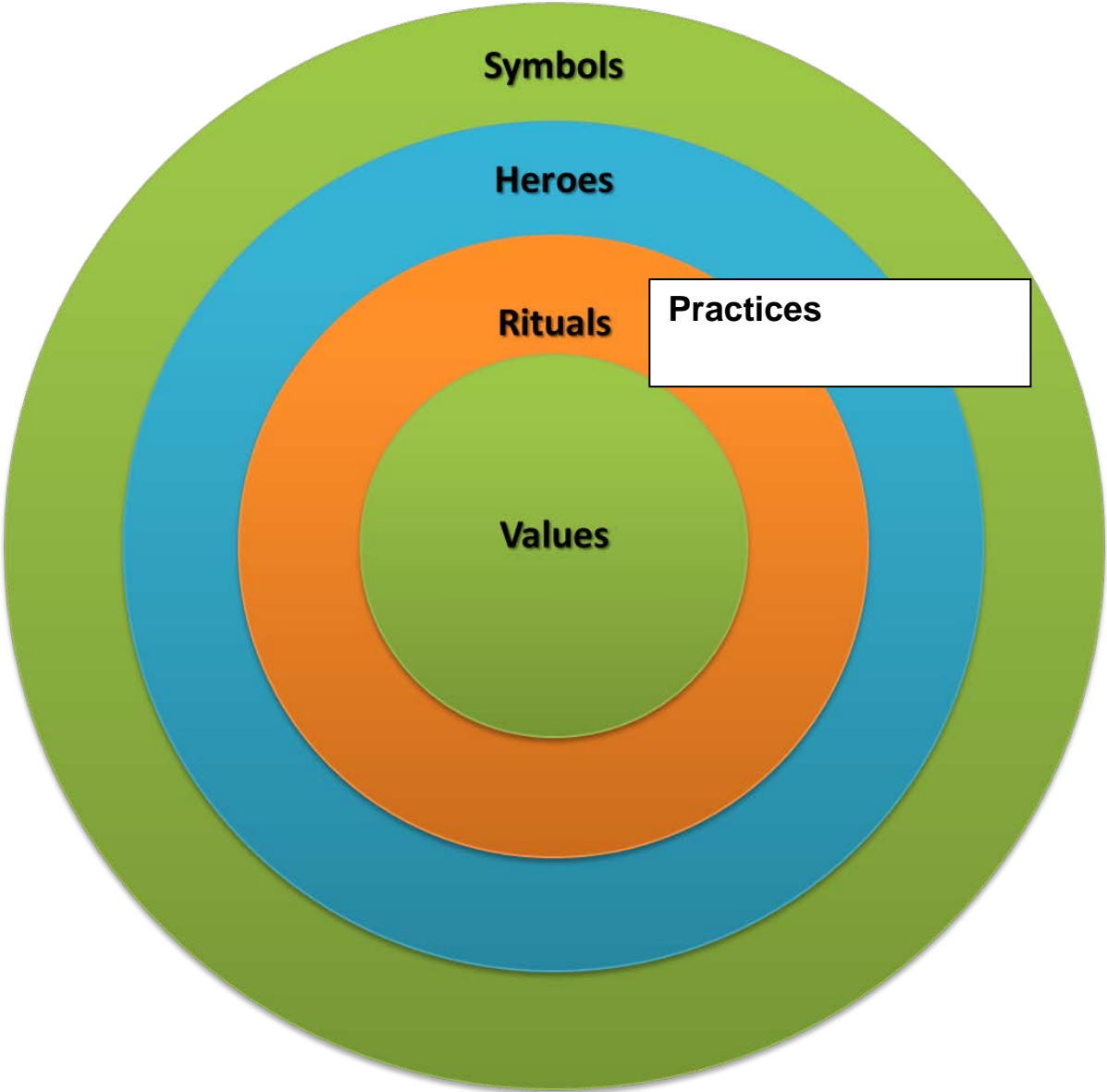


Figure 2: The 'onion diagram': manifestations of culture at different levels of depth.

Hofstede (1991:7) distinguishes between four manifestations of cultural difference that by illustration relate to the layers of an onion. The first manifestation is symbols, which are words like slogans or jargon, gestures like a fist in the air, pictures like a Sarah Baartman portrait or objects like a country's flag that carry a particular meaning that is only recognized by those who share the culture (Hofstede, 1991:7). Symbols are subject to change with time and may be

imitated from other cultural groups (Hofstede, 1991:7). The second is heroes, which Hofstede (1991:8) describes as extremely esteemed in a culture and as representations of behaviour, particularly noble behaviour. Heroes may be living or dead, they may also be imaginary, for instance, a fictional character such as Superman or a real one like the former South African president Nelson Mandela. The third cultural difference manifestation is rituals, which Hofstede (1991:8) describes as shared activities, technically unnecessary for attaining desired ends, but which are culturally thought of as socially essential, for example, manner of greeting and paying respect and the way of interacting socially, corporate-wise and religiously. According to Hofstede (1991:8) symbols, heroes and rituals may be identified as human practices, since they are only visible to the outside observer with their cultural meaning invincible to the observer and only explicit and valuable to the individuals who practice them, which lead us to the fourth cultural difference, values.

Values, according to Hofstede (1991:8), are,

broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others. Values are feelings with an arrow to it: they have a plus and a minus side. They deal with:

evil vs. good

dirty vs. clean

ugly vs. beautiful

unnatural vs. natural

abnormal vs. normal

paradoxical vs. logical

irrational vs. rational

From this description one can see that values operate through opposites. Hofstede (1991:8; 9) states that they are among the primary subconscious lessons that children learn and they play a significant role when it comes to distinguishing between the desirable, how people think the world and things ought to be and, the desired, what people actually want. These are influenced by norms. For example, Don Mateza in Mda's *Black Diamond* pursues the idea of living a humble and simple life, but alternatively desires the flashy and extravagant lifestyle of indulging in expensive material things presented to him by Tumi. Values are the core of the community's

cultural practices, such as, rituals, leadership roles and their cultural symbols (Hofstede, 1991:9).

This section has established a definition of culture. The following is a discussion of the Batswana cultural perspectives on women, which will be executed in the subsections. The ideological perspectives provided below serve to describe the typical cultural perspectives.

3.4 General traditional perspectives of the Batswana culture

3.4.1 Traditional Batswana women and the work place

In the Batswana culture, tasks are usually divided according to gender. Traditionally, men tend the cattle (Schapera, 1970:11), wage war, and embark on cattle raids and hunt. Women, on the other hand, are trained to look after the crops and to perform home chores (Joyce, 2009:140). The following example is taken from Merriweather (1969:12): “A couple of women were on their knees in the courtyard covering up the hard, sun-baked surface with a thin layer of moist earth and cattle dung. They used their hands to smear the mixture smoothly over the surface, the deft movement of their fingers making attractive designs as they worked”. In the Batswana culture, women from a young age are encouraged to stay at home. In Setswana “mosadi” is a short form of the verbal phrase “mosala-gae”, meaning the one who remains at home. Females take on a full time domestic role, such as cooking and looking after crops, including minding the children and taking care of the household (Merriweather, 1969:26). The following is what Mogapi (1992:10) states in his book on traditional Setswana literature,

...mme ke ene a nnang le bana nako e ntsi, bogolo jang fa ba sa le babotlana, ke ena a tshwanetseng go tlhokomela kgodiso ya bona ka fa molaong, a ba ruta tiro, a ba ruta boitshwaro jo bo siameng...

(...a mother is the one who stays behind at home with the children, especially when they are still small; she is the one who must take care of the children’s growth according to traditional rules, to teach them to do the work, teaching them good behaviour) (My translation- NPQ).

Even with the influence of westernization in the Batswana culture, men were the first ones in their village homes to go and find jobs in the public industrial cities and join labour unions to have their labour rights protected. For example, Chief Sechele II in 1907 sent healthy young men to the city of Johannesburg to build churches and work on the gold mines (Merriweather, 1969:11). Foster (1962:29) states that, “cities are the focal points of change”.

However, for Batswana women the exposure to westernization has had them remain for many years with unprotected labour rights, making it hard for them to work and choose their occupation (Finnemore & Cunningham, 1995:180). Nonetheless, with the changes brought by democracy with emphasis on social equality, in terms of section 9 and 23 of the South African Constitution, women are now provided the constitutional right to fair labour practices and to join a trade union of their preference. For example, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, a former South African deputy president and currently head of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN women), is among the many black women who have entered the public domain.

In spite of the new bill of rights, women in general still have to juggle their professional duties and perform domestic chores².

3.4.2 Traditional Batswana women and finances

Traditionally, women are expected to work hard to provide for the family's needs by performing domestic chores and support their families financially (Dikotla, 2007:180). According to Dikotla (2007:180) in order to make money women would either exchange their crops for cash or sell fruits and vegetables to big markets. However, males are mainly responsible for providing for the family. Consider the following example taken from *Khumo Segwagwa e a Pharuma* (1984:4) by S.A. Moroke,

Thipanyane a re, 'mo tsenye mo diphaposing tsotlhe, o mo supetse sengwe le sengwe se se mo ntlong. O se ka wa boifa sepe moratiwa. Dilo tse ga o a di utswa. O di reketswe ke monna wa gago ka mofufutso wa phatla ya gagwe'

(Thipanyane says, 'take her into all the rooms, to show her everything that is in the house. Don't fear my love. You did not steal these things. Your husband has worked hard to earn the money to buy them for you) (My translation - NPQ).

In the excerpt above Thipanyane is depicted as the provider in his family. Prior to the introduction of currency, cattle were the great common denominator and the element that was the ultimate measure of wealth and success, an indication of social status and venerated in cultural rituals (Joyce, 2010:139). Before the exposure to westernization the concept of working had nothing much to do with getting paid for labour in order to maintain a family unit, because the community depended on the land for crops and they used animal skins for clothing, which

² See the *Real* magazine article on challenges that modern women face with regard to their cultural practices.

were then less expensive than the food and clothes bought at shopping markets and stores (Schapera, 1970:214). Most of the Batswana people were involved in livestock farming (Joyce, 2010: 139).

Since Batswana men were by traditional culture considered heads of households, they were also entitled the right to property ownership (Schapera, 1970:50). Some of the wealthiest male farmers owned dozens of farmland areas, cultivated lands that were subject to ritual and magical practices such as rain making and ancestral sacrificial ceremonies (Joyce, 2009:139-140). However, in terms of section 25 and 26 of the Constitution (1996) all citizens now have the right to own property, to have access to land on an equitable basis, and women are able to work and earn high salaries³. There are growing numbers of black women entering the public workplace. With the introduction to new technology and transformation, there is a rise in career orientation among Batswana women, demands for advancement opportunities, and training of women in previously male dominated occupations. For example, black women from across different racial groups such as Khanyi Dhlomo Chijioke⁴, who is a hardworking and successful business mogul, is one of the testimonies of women who have ventured into the male dominated career fields.

3.4.3 Traditional Batswana women, legislation and leadership roles

Conventionally, Batswana society is patriarchal in nature with well-defined social statuses within the customary Batswana society, from the paramount chief and his kinsmen and through the aristocracy to the commoners (Joyce, 2010:140). Male individuals who are circumcised have the inherited leadership role both in the private and public domain, while female individuals are subject to a strict ranking order within their immediate family unit and the community to which they belong or fall under even when they have been to *bojale* (Schapera, 1978:1).

In a family unit a male person is the head of the family structure (Mogapi, 1992:9), and the rest of the family members are subject to his orders (Hooks, 1981:102). In the case where there is more than one elderly male family member, the ranking will depend chronologically on the ages of the males in that particular family unit, from the father to the oldest son who will be followed by the youngest son if present and then only will the mother and all the girls be considered as part of the immediate family unit.

According to Mogapi (1992:67) and Joyce (2009:140), before the Batswana were introduced to western culture, the villages had been under the government of the local paramount chief. Traditionally, the supreme chief rules mainly by consensus with the advice of his senior relatives

³ Du Plessis & Ndlangisa (2013:14) state that Mamphela Ramphele is one of the highest salary earning black women.

⁴ Holmes' (2013:3) editorial about Dhlomo's new entrepreneurial project.

and regiment officials (Comaroff, 1974:37; 42), known in Setswana as “banna ba mephato or lekgotla” (Schapera, 1970:8). The chief’s responsibility as the head of the community is to rule, judge, take on the role of a maker of laws, as guardian, and manage the government of the people he is leading (Joyce, 2010:140). The inheritance of chieftainship is only limited to male community members with the belief that the heir must be the chief’s eldest son or the eldest uncle in the case where the chief does not have male descendants (Schapera, 1970:53). In support of this argument, Roberts (1985: 76) asserts that, “the office of ruler ideally devolved from father to the eldest son”.

Similar to Roberts, Comaroff (1974:38) states that if the chief happens to have more than one wife the “primary rule is that the heir must be the eldest son of his father’s principal wife”. In J.M. Ntsime’s *Se se Jeleng Rre*, Moratwa warns Kebotsaletswe about a planned assassination by Bankgoditse,

Kebotsaletswe, Mmasera o ba thusa go dira tiro e, ka gore o gopola gore kwa bofelong o tla bona sengwe. Jaanong, wena mmitse o bue le ene. Mo lemose gore le fa ba ka go bolaya ga ba kitla ba bona sepe, gone dithoto tsa rraago di tla nna tsa borangwaneago le bana ba bona. Le bogosi ga ba kitla ba bo bona; ka gone Mmapitsa o ne a sa nyalwa ke rraago ka semolao.

(Kebotsaletswe, Mmasera is helping them to do this, because she thinks that at the end she will gain something. Now, you must call her and speak to her. Make her realize that even if they kill you, they will never benefit from this at all, because your father’s inheritance will be your uncles’ and their children’s. They will not even inherit the chieftainship; because Mmapitsa was not legitimately married to your father) (My translation - NPQ).

In the example above, there is a strong belief that chieftainship is inherited and not a result of election. Moratwa is advising Kebotsaletswe to take action in order to protect his father’s inheritance. According to Schapera (1970:55) chieftainship by inheritance in this case would be applicable only when it happens to a child of a legitimately married wife and not of a concubine. An illegitimate chief’s son forfeits the right of inheritance as an heir even in the case where he is the only surviving son alive (Schapera, 1970:55).

The political circumstances of the past have affected the Batswana community within and across the borders of South Africa (Joyce, 2010:137). According to Joyce (2010: 139) the Batswana population had been allowed a modicum of local self-government in the 1960s, but

were confined to their marked land area known as Bophuthatswana. In 1977 Bophuthatswana was granted independent status. However, women still experienced the infringement of their personal rights (Joyce, 2009:139). Joyce (2010:140) states that the modern political life phase of the Batswana can be described as village democracy, since each concentration of people is divided into *Dikgotla* (local divisional councils) for public meetings in which public matters are discussed.

Therefore, the community councils may be understood as a particular clan's representative for political involvement (Schapera, 1970:53). Male attendants are dominant members of the community councils with total exclusion of female participants (Comaroff, 1974:44). The content of the discussion during the community councils remains confidential among its members (Becker, 1971:6). The members of the community council only send out instructions, which the female individuals must follow without questioning (Schapera, 1970:89). However, changes became evident in some of the Batswana communities as a result of section 19 of the South African Constitution (1996), which provides for freedom to make political choices, for all citizens to vote in elections and participate in politics. For instance, black women such as Ruth Mompati⁵, former Member of Parliament. Nomvula Mokonyane⁶ premier of the Gauteng Province, are known as the acting senior ANC female leaders.

However, Ntibinyane (2011) states that empowerment of women in politics in the community of Batswana females has been insignificant, with little developmental independence since 1965⁷. Women have yet to work twice as hard compared to men, since qualifications and better education seem to be still not enough. There appears to be uncertainties among political activists such as Women's League president Angie Motshekga and senior ANC leader Nomvula Mokonyane about whether women are eligible to be assigned political leadership roles⁸. Molele (2013:12) states that Mokonyane is positive that,

We have plenty women who can lead the party – and the republic...Nothing is complicated for the ANC. When the opportunity [to look for a female president] arises, we do have that capacity in the movement. For now, there is a male president but it doesn't preclude that there can be a woman leader of the ANC. The ANC women's

⁵ Go to the following link: <http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/ruth-mompati> for Mompati's profile

⁶ See other black female operating political activists in Celland's (2013:29-33) *Mail and Guardian* comment and analysis.

⁷ See also Kings' (2013:8) views on the current developmental state of women empowerment in South Africa.

⁸ Mokonyane and Motshekga have contradictive perspectives about the subject of women being assigned political leadership roles (Molele, 2013:12).

league has been at the forefront of advocating for women's rights and representation.

Motshekga does not seem to agree with Mokonyane, as Molele (2013:12) asserts, "...Motshekga, who is a close ally of President Jacob Zuma, told journalists in Johannesburg that the women's league would be 'fighting a losing battle' if it pushes for a female president". From these types of contradictory perspectives among women about women one may feel the inclination to believe that female emancipation both mentally and otherwise is still far off for modern black women.

3.4.4 Traditional Batswana women and education

Batswana women did not receive formal education and training in the past (Mosiane, 1994:25). However, they did receive practical teachings that were passed down by older women to the younger generation of girls at initiation schools called *bojale*, while young boys were taken to their separate initiative schools known as *bogwera* (Mogapi, 1992:35). At the initiation schools young men were taught cultural principles through song and were also toughened up by being put under severe hardship and deprivation (Shillington, 1985:11). The young girls at the *bojale* (initiation schools) were taught skills that were traditionally considered to turn them into good women, wives and mothers (Joyce, 2009:140).

Based on section 16 and 29 of the Constitution (1996) every citizen now has an equal right to basic education, adult basic education, academic freedom and freedom of scientific research. An increasing number of women continue to enter higher institutions of learning. Women occupy different professions as medical practitioners, lawyers and magistrates, theologians, political ministers, specialized engineers, and chief executive officers of high profile companies. Naledi Pandor as the operating South African Minister of Home Affairs is an example of a well-educated black woman.

3.4.5 Traditional Batswana women and religious belief

The Batswana traditionally believe in rituals and magical practices such as reverence for the *Badimo* (ancestral worship) and rainmaking, which is highly significant to them (Hammond-Tooke, 1974:324). Traditionally, the ancestral spirits are highly respected: this was the case in the past, but they are still revered by some of their descendants. Regular ceremonial offerings and prayers are made by the descendants to prevent the anger of the ancestral spirits (Joyce, 2010:140-141). Lye and Murray (1980:124) states "Should they repudiate the ancestors, they may be sharply reminded of them by the mystical capacity of the *Badimo* to inflict illness or misfortune". Communication with the ancestors may be achieved through dreams. Consider the

following example taken from Ntsime's *Pelo e Ja Serati*: Batšhipile, Dithole's friend, informs the chief, Dithole's father, about the ancestral visit that has taken place during his sleep to bring him a message about Dithole who had run up to the ancestral mountain (Ntsime, 1982:66),

Kgosi ke lorile Badimo ba nthaya ba re ke se tshwenyege, tsala ya me e
tla goroga

(Chief, I had a dream in which the ancestors told me not to worry, my
friend will return) (My translation - NPQ)

In Batswana culture it is imperative to obey the message received from the ancestors and to avoid upsetting them, because they are believed to have supernatural powers of protection and may turn their backs on those who do not reverently submit to them (Lesete, 2000:42). It is believed that the unbeliever will either get severely ill or experience misfortunes that sometimes may lead to death. For instance, Olebile in Monyaise's *Go ša Baori* experiences misfortunes throughout his life, which is thought of as a punishment from the ancestors (Monyaise, 1970:33),

Ga se mo e kete botshelo jwa gagwe bo fatlha Badimo! Tota ba mo
sekisang fa a sa robalelwe ke ditlhokwa jaana? Ba mo agetse mosako
jaaka mosimanyana yo o setlhogo a agela seboko mosako wa tlhaga,
mme e re morago a bo a o tshuba. Le ena ba mo dira fela jalo.

(It is not as though his life is offensive to the ancestors! Actually, what is
their reproach against him with such unrest in his life? They have built
him a laager like when a cruel boy builds a worm a grass laager, who
afterwards puts it alight. They are doing the same with him.) (My
translation - NPQ)

The ancestors are revered and it is believed that they should not be aggravated by not pleasing them, because when they take offence in a person's actions they will punish him or her. In the above extract, the boy represents the ancestors, and the worm symbolizes their offender; the action presented is representational of their punishment. The Batswana also hold strong beliefs in different types of spiritual mediums, such as, the traditional healers and diviners who act as key communication channels between the dead ancestors and their living descendants (Joyce, 2010: 141). Hammond-Tooke (1974:319) states that the Batswana believe in the existence of *Modimo* (Supreme Being). For example, Dr Merriweather, in his autobiography, assures Morwakgosi that God will help his son and that at the medical centre they will give him injections (Merriweather, 1969:14),

God will help him; we'll give him injections...

The above statement is indicative of a belief in God. Morwakgosi also believes in God and he is convinced that God is good and almighty. He says,

God is good, he will help, replied Morwakgosi ... who can argue with God?

The exposure to western culture had brought to the Batswana culture Christian faith as a conversion that was introduced by white explorers (Lye & Murray, 1980:65), such as William Somerville and P.J. Truter during the nineteenth century (Joyce, 2010:137). According to Joyce (2010:137) John Campbell and Robert Moffat, the churchmen of the London Missionary Society, entered the land of the Tlhaping in 1813 during the reign of chief Mothibe and spread the teachings of the Christian faith. As a result, Christian faith had an influence on some of the Batswana people who even decided to convert to it and reject traditionalism (Tlou & Campbell, 1994: 122). Nevertheless, some of the Batswana people have stopped practising several cultural practices, such as the belief in polygamy, payment of bogadi, traditional circumcision and rainmaking, because of the enlightenment of Christianity. There are some of the Batswana people and other black ethnic groups who continue to practise both the Christian faith and traditionalism. Others have decided to practise only traditionalism as part of their human rights with reference to section 15 and 31 of the Constitution (1996).

In the case of death of a marriage partner, the survivor undergoes a period of mourning referred to as *boswagadi* (widowhood) and is expected to refrain from his or her usual daily activities because she or he is considered ritually impure (Schapera, 1970:163). The period of mourning and ritual performance differ from one ethnic tribe to another, in a sense that in one tribe it may take a duration of three months while in another tribe it can last up to six months if not a whole year (Schapera, 1970:163). For example, Savita Mbuli, whose husband and SABC 2 TV personality Vuyo Mbuli was declared dead on the 19 May 2013, is said to have performed a cleansing ritual three months after Vuyo's funeral (Malatji, 2013:3). According to Malatji (2013:3), "[d]uring the ceremony, the Mbuli's and Vuyo's wife Savita performed rituals to cleanse her and rid the family of any bad omens his death may have brought them. The ritual also marks the end of their mourning period". During the mourning tenure a widowed woman is culturally expected to dress in black as an indication of her grief, just as "Savita has been wearing mourning clothes since his [Vuyo's] death" (Malatji, 2013:3), until the end of the mourning term. Only then may the woman be declared free to assume her usual activities. Malatji (2013:3) claims, "Noyana said that the ceremony was performed to give Savita freedom to do as she wants with her life. That means she can go to the malls and she can be seen by people". In the Batswana culture, once a widowed woman has completed the observances and has performed

a ritual, she may even consider marrying again (Schapera, 1970:163). Modern women seem to be still in need of cultural emancipation (Kumona & Ndlazi, 2013:84), which is echoed in the following statement: “There are many well-educated people like Lindiwe who find it hard to live in two worlds at the same time. They struggle to reconcile being modern women who are doing it for themselves and following the culture they were brought up in” (Kumona & Ndlazi, 2013:84). As a result, even with the experience of urbanization, women still seem to be dealing with traditional cultural challenges and are considered rebellious or not proud of their culture when they reject practising cultural rituals (Kumona & Ndlazi, 2013:84). However, there are modern women who intend to face the challenge and choose to not perform traditional rituals and still identify themselves as belonging to their ethnic tribes.

3.4.6 Traditional Batswana women and marriage

In the Batswana culture, marriage seems to be more about the coming together of the two families through the couple than about the love and devotion between two individuals (Mogapi, 1992:149). Oshupile and Matlhodi's pre-arranged marriage in Monyaise's *Bogosi Kupe* is an example of a traditional marriage (Monyaise, 1967:3). Traditionally, the elders would choose a spouse for their child in order to approve the marriage, leaving the young couple with no say in the choice of who they want to marry (Joyce, 2010:140). According to Schapera (1970:130) a girl child would often be betrothed to her future husband without her consent or before she is even born. The only time she will know about her future husband is during the formalities of the betrothal when her future in-laws come to confirm her as their choice and to pay *bogadi* (bride price), by transferring a stipulated number of livestock, usually cows, by the elders from the bride's side (Schapera, 1970:130).

The Batswana believe that a man must pay *bogadi* in order to marry (Kalule-Sabiti, 1995:24). Moreover, paying *bogadi* functions to hand over “the reproductive power of a woman from her own family into that of her husband” (Schapera, 1970:164). Hence, the woman after *bogadi* has been paid inherits her husband's surname. Nonetheless, there is a growing split of interest when it comes to the payment of *bogadi*, as some among the Batswana community believe that the significance of paying *bogadi* has shifted from being a positive gesture of showing gratitude towards the bride's parents to a money making scheme (Schapera, 1970:138).

An important social transition, coinciding with the growth of the mining industry, is that males, some as young as seventeen, started being recruited to the mines of Johannesburg (Merriweather, 1969:29). Some went to the mines without the approval of their fathers, and some were sent to earn money for their fathers or masters, while others, if married, sent some money to their wives (Merriweather, 1969:29). Moving to the cities had its disadvantages as some Batswana men ended up being increasingly involved in unauthorised polygamous affairs.

In Batswana culture, unauthorized polygamy or a couple cohabiting without the consent of both parties' parents is a disgrace and is seen as disrespectful to the ancestors, the family and the community (Schapera, 1940:33-34). According to Batswana cultural beliefs, divorce is considered the last option for a difficult marriage (Mogapi, 1992:162; 165). For example, in Ntsime's play, Senwametsi stays in her marriage with her husband Kgosi Selebi even though he stops eating her food and starts to spend less quality time with her (Ntsime, 1983:4; 7 & 8). In the Batswana tradition a married woman has the power as the wife of her husband to report any ill treatment and immoral acts on the part of her husband to her in-laws (Schapera, 1970:59).

In circumstances of a husband's death, the bride, and the children if present, remain as part of the family of her in-laws and are identified with her deceased husband's surname (Schapera, 1970:159). As far as her husband's inheritance is concerned, her children are recognised as heirs and not the ones from the illegitimate affair (Schapera, 1970:164). Moreover, when the widowed woman has no children with her late husband, her in-laws may arrange for her to marry one of her deceased husband's older male siblings. The practice is called *seantlo*, also known as *go tsema mo tlung* (to enter the house – Comaroff's translation) (Comaroff, 1974:38).

Child bearing is essential in Batswana culture, because the Batswana community holds the belief that marriage is primarily designed to expand the family clan, and have descendants, especially male ones, as they will be the ones carrying the clan's name forward (Comaroff, 1974:38-39). Failure of a married woman to bear children results in her husband negotiating with his wife or his in-laws to make a request for his wife's older female sibling or relative who is not barren to act as a surrogate mother (Schapera, 1970:155). In support of this statement, Comaroff (1974:39) states, "another rule allows for the bearing of children on behalf of a woman, in this case by a younger sister (real or classificatory), who cohabits with the husband".

3.5 Concluding remarks

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed cultural perspective on women with specific attention to the context of the traditional Batswana cultural ideologies. The above discussion has illustrated that even with the social transition from the traditional Batswana lifestyle to modern city life, traditional cultural perspectives on women continues to exist within the ethnic groups. Moreover, there is a cultural assimilation within the Bantu ethnic groups, particularly within the South-central divisions, that is the Batswana, the Bapedi and the Basotho, with regard to the cultural ideologies.

The cultural ideologies show a connection in the practice of traditional values and rituals across the Bantu ethnic groups. For instance, the Sotho and Nguni tribes share similar ideologies about the administration of the community by a male chief king, otherwise known as a *Kgosi* or

an *Inkosi*. There is a common value for *bogadi* or *lobola* and ritual observances, such as mourning for the dead, cleansing and ancestral rituals. However, within the social divisions there may be some community members who practise the Christian faith. The Batswana ethnic groups related to the other Bantu ethnic clusters value marriage highly. As a result, there are similarities in the Bantu ethnic divisions with regard to cultural ideologies.

It is evident that culture is a form of boundary and a determiner of a specific community's practices and ways of living (Haralambos, 1980:3). It determines and influences how community members perceive, think, feel and react to life situations. It is learned and passed down from one generation to another and from one ethnic group to the next. However, because of its dynamic nature in relation to the new South African realities it becomes challenging to adhere to and it is not necessarily exclusive to a particular ethnic group.

Chapter three has provided a discussion of traditional Batswana cultural ideologies pertaining to Batswana women, with emphasis on stereotypical perspectives. The following chapter will focus on a comparative analysis of the two selected novels, *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* by D.P.S. Monyaise and *Black Diamond* by Zakes Mda.

CHAPTER 4: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF D.P.S. MONYAISE'S *NGAKA, MOSADI MOOKA* AND ZAKES MDA'S *BLACK DIAMOND*

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter a comparative study of Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Mda's *Black Diamond* is conducted. The intention is to determine how frames and scripts apply in the comparative study of the narrative perspective on female characters in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*. The theoretical framework derived from Iser (1978) and Herman (2003; 2007), as discussed in chapter two, is applied in this chapter. I will utilize transactional reader response as explained by Rosenblatt (1985) to construct a comparative analysis, with special focus on Iser and Herman's theories on gap filling.

To accomplish the aims of this chapter, the discussion assumes the following structure. Firstly, a comparison between the titles of the selected novels is made. Secondly, the process of gap filling with recourse to cultural views as discussed in chapter two, in the narratives of *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond* is described. Thirdly, a comparison of the portrayal of the main female characters through gap filling, specifically of Diarona in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond* is carried out. The intention of the analysis is to discover how Diarona and Tumi are portrayed in terms of traditional narrative perspectives; by employing the theoretical framework presented in chapter two and three. Related examples from *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond* will be provided. Special attention will go to narrative perspectives on Diarona and Tumi with regard to social roles and responsibilities derived from value and belief systems passed down to them.

The following is a comparative evaluation of the titles and black female characters that is Diarona and Tumi, in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*.

4.2 Comparison of the titles of Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Mda's *Black Diamond*

Monyaise (quoted in Pretorius' research interview, 1990:173) states that the title *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* is derived from the following Setswana proverb: "Mosadi mooka o nya le motshegare (bangwe ba re le mariga⁹)". According to Seboni (1962:144) the original version of the Setswana proverb is "Mosadi mookana, o nya mariga", which he explains as follows, "Basadi ba itse go loga maano fa banna ba eme tlhogo" (women know how to be strategic when men do not have a plan of action) (My translation - NPQ). I interpret Monyaise's proverb as follows: woman [like

⁹ See Lesete's (2000:34) version of the proverb.

a] thorn tree, thrives under high-pressure circumstances. A day (“motshegare”) or winter season (“mariga”) in Monyaise’s translation is symbolic of a woman. The phases of a day or a winter season are representational of the experiences that a woman, like a day and a winter season, goes through. The experiences may relate to the changing time from morning to dusk, or sometimes weather conditions such as the rise of the sun, possibility of a cloudy or rainy day, or a dusty day. Similar to a winter season, a woman experiences the harsh conditions that are apparent in the winter season, such as the cold weather and drought and she still manages to survive it all.

In the Batswana culture an acacia tree is valued for its benefits, such as being used to sit in its shade during the summer, to fuel fire especially in winter and for the edible gum it excretes. Like the acacia tree, a woman does not relent or die even under extreme circumstances. According to Pretorius (1990:173), Monyaise’s interpretation of the proverb is that,

Mosadi ga a ke a sitwa ke maano a go rarabolola mathata a gagwe.
Mosadi o maanomano.

(A woman is never incapable of solving her problems. She is full of strategies) (My translation - NPQ).

The extract above describes women as strong and as possessing a tenacious attitude towards life challenges. Like an acacia tree, a woman is also perceived as persistent, because the acacia tree is recognized for its continuous secretion throughout the changing seasons. The title of Monyaise’s novel is symbolic of Diarona’s character as she withstands and overcomes trying events in the narrative up until the end. Her name is also symbolic of her characteristics, which is a derivation from a verbal phrase “go rona”, which may be interpreted as to “be unbecoming [to] or unsuitable [for]; fit badly, e.g. clothes; be objectionable in behaviour” (MacMillan Setswana and English dictionary, 2012:492). Diarona’s name is symbolic or representative of her unpleasant circumstances throughout the narrative.

Lesete (2000:33) translates Monyaise’s novel title as “Doctor, woman thorn tree”, while Andrzejewski *et al* (1985:640) translate the title as “Doctor, nurse”, which may suggest the role that a nurse plays as a doctor’s assistant. The acacia tree can survive under harsh environmental conditions. In addition, it can be used as firewood. Moreover, Lesete (2000:34) maintains that the acacia tree produces edible gum that herd boys carefully pick from the tree while making sure that they do not get pricked by its thorns. The title of Monyaise’s novel can therefore be said to have a dual or ambiguous meaning. Lesete (2000:34) supports the above statement by stating: “This proverb links the usefulness and danger of a thorn tree to the necessity and cruelty of women”. In other words, women are recognized as possessing good

qualities, such as nurturing and caring but also bad ones, evil and cruel. For example, culturally Diarona may be regarded as a good woman who is caring, as throughout the narrative she is fighting for her relationship with Pule in the hope that she will win him back from Stella. Hence, Doctor Bodigelo refers to her as “mosadi”, assumed to be someone’s wife, as reflected in the following assertion (Monyaise, 1965:39),

“Ga nkitla ke letla gore o ngwege jaaka o lekile go ngwega. Fa o sa ipatle, rona re a go batla”.

(I will not allow you to disappear like you have tried to. If you don’t want yourself, we want you) (My translation - NPQ).

‘Nnyaa, ga ke bue fela. Ke bua le wena; o mosadi’.

(‘No, I’m not just speaking. I am speaking to you; you are a woman’)
(Monyaise, 1965:49) (My translation - NPQ).

The quotations above build up expectations in the reader. She or he may continue to relate the novel’s title to the narrative events concerning the depiction of female characters as the narrative unfolds. Moreover, the reader may predict a possible special relationship between Dr Bodigelo and Diarona. Stored information regarding women is retrieved to construct a connection and develop a symbolic interpretation of the characteristics of a woman and an acacia tree. The reader may establish an inference transaction, namely that Diarona is an approved woman who is suitable to be a wife. The reader concludes this from Dr Bodigelo’s statement, which is supported by his marriage proposal to Diarona (Monyaise, 1965:49; 69). Stella, in my opinion, might be regarded as stubborn, because she refuses to marry.

In contrast to Monyaise’s *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka*, the title of Mda’s *Black Diamond* is not gender specific. Rather, it is suggestive of black people in general given the adjective “black” included in the title. The term diamond may be interpreted with reference to the following descriptive features from the online Oxford English Dictionary,

[a] very hard and brilliant precious stone ... either colourless or variously tinted. It is the most brilliant and valuable of precious stones, and the hardest substance known ... [s]omething very precious; a thing or person of great worth, or (in mod. use) a person of very brilliant attainments.

Peltzman and Grant (2004:14) describe a diamond as a superlative and extremely rare precious stone. Diamonds are associated with a prosperous, luxurious and powerful lifestyle (Edwards &

Dickie, 2004:7; 14). One of the contributing factors to the radiance of a diamond is the way it is cut (Wilson, 1967:18).

In South African society the phrase “black diamond” generally refers to the post-apartheid “emerging black petit-bourgeoisie” (Msomi, 2011:18). It is a term used to identify Black Economic Empowerment beneficiaries whose lifestyle is that of the culture of worshipping unbridled accumulation (Msomi, 2011:18). Ansell (2010:4) refers to the term as a social status. Black Diamond could be thought of as an equivalent term for Randlords of old (Molakeng, 2009:5).

Therefore, from this description an inference regarding the possible symbolic meaning of a diamond may be related to an individual’s personality, and his or her social and financial status. In the case of Mda’s *Black Diamond*, an implied link is made to the social and financial status of the black nation in general. The diamond in Mda’s title significantly relates to the main female characters in all his narrative texts, to mention a few, such as Noria (1995), Xoliswa Ximiya (2000), Saluni (2006) and Tumi (2009) who are strong women because they have to withstand tough experiences and set out to reinvent their “lustre”. The female characters in Mda’s novels, like the diamond, are rare and they stand out.

Related to the diamond’s connotation of luxury, Tumi is extravagant. She allows herself expensive material possessions, such as luxurious cars, her apartment at the Three Oaks townhouse complex in North Riding, furniture, restaurants and clothes (Mda, 2009:11; 12; 46 & 149). She does not get bothered about how much she spends.

Tumi is indestructible. She has an unflinching attitude and places emphasis on positive thinking, which she believes is the key to a successful life,

‘Ja, positive thinking! That’s the only way out, Don,’ she says once more, her eyes daring him to argue with that (Mda, 2009:14).

Tumi is resilient, and because of her positive attitude, she is able to bounce back after losing a bid for the television licence (Mda, 2009:86-87), and after her break-up with Don (Mda, 2009:187).

In correspondence with her name that means joy, she is a joyful person. The day after her separation from Don she is seen on a television interview,

He [Don] is not paying much attention to Vuyo Mbuli who is interviewing three women on his ‘Morning Live’ programme on SABC 2. Until he hears Tumi’s voice. And Tumi’s mischievous giggle (Mda, 2009:190).

Despite her painful experience, Tumi is vibrant and maintains a positive attitude by venturing into new business assignment deals without allowing her break up with Don to depress her (Mda, 2009:190). She is extraordinary. She does everything exceptionally well, she thoroughly prepares for her presentations and meetings as is evident from the following quotation,

At first Tumi was out of her depth in this company, but she was not ashamed to ask questions and read up on the technical aspects of the free-to-air television industry. She also went to the library at Wits University and read extensively on the subject. Now she can hold her own in the debates, and is the one who explains concepts to Nomsa and Maki who are still out of their depth (Mda, 2009:62).

Tumi has the same attitude when preparing her presentations for meetings. Like the one she prepares for with Kenny Meno,

‘Are you not coming to bed? It’s almost midnight.’

‘Later, Don. I have a presentation tomorrow. Kenny Meno expects me to be ready for any questions those IBA guys will ask.’ (Mda, 2009:69)

Her attitude toward self-advancement is similar to the cutting of a diamond. According to Edwards & Dickie (2004:20) the right cut to a diamond results in a great sparkle of multi-colours. The more Tumi hones her craft, and the more she stretches herself intellectually, like a brilliantly cut diamond, she shines brighter and radiates the multiple colours of her personality. She is unique and she moulds and refines herself, by religiously going to the gym to shape her figure and by intellectually expanding herself (Mda, 2009:59; 62).

Similar to a diamond, she has endured high pressures. While growing up she was mocked, as is reflected in the focalizer’s words,

Tumi suffered the fate of all the kids from that school who never got any respect. She was the laughing stock of those who went to better schools, and everyone expected that she would amount to nothing. No one imagined that one day she would be a top model because those days she was a tall, gangly tomboy with a silly giggle (Mda, 2009:22).

According to Edwards and Dickie (2004:22) diamonds, when mined, are discovered as rough, dull pebbles with an irregular shape, and then they are refined by a lapidary and turned into dazzling gem stones that we see at jewellery stalls. Tumi is like an uncut diamond, hailing from the rough and ready township environment. The level of refinement she later experiences is the

result of the onslaughts of her mockers and detractors. As a result, she grows into the gleaming diamond that she is in the city of Johannesburg.

Diamonds are renowned for their durability (Wilson, 1967:30), and Tumi is indeed strong. Even through trying times she manages to regain her lustrous attitude towards life, for example, she successfully becomes a celebrated super-model and a prosperous business mogul (Mda, 2009:22; 59).

From the above discussion one can conclude that Monyaise and Mda have both drawn a relation between their novel titles and their main female characters, which as a result makes their female characters central to their narratives. Monyaise and Mda in their novels explore the social transition from the traditional Batswana lifestyle to modern city life. However, unlike Monyaise in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka*, Mda in the title of *Black Diamond* has creatively and symbolically portrayed the cultural change reflected within gender, ethnic and class identities in South Africa (Mazibuko, 2007:18-19).

In this section a comparative analysis of Monyaise and Mda's novel titles has been carried out. In the following section traditional narrative perspectives on Diarona and Tumi are explored and compared.

4.3 Narrative gap filling from a cultural perspective

Monyaise in his *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* seems to be foregrounding the Batswana's transition. He sets the main events of his narrative predominantly in the city of Johannesburg, but it still retains remnants of the stereotypical cultural perspectives on female characters. Andrzejewski *et al* (1985:640) state that Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* is characteristic of "grim realistic reportage", because it reflects on social issues and it is one of Monyaise's literary works that "appears to be free from traditionalist influences". However, while the assertion of Andrzejewski *et al* (1985:640) is true to a certain extent, they are not specific about the traditional influences that Monyaise is apparently moving away from.

Monyaise portrays his characters in a witty and interesting manner through dialogue and constructs character-driven plots in a revealing style (Andrzejewski *et al*, 1985:640). However, the problem that this study raises is whether his characterization of female characters is influenced by stereotypical cultural ideologies or not. Moreover, Malepe (1974:8) evaluates Monyaise's novel as a work of high standard and problematic to comprehend for some of his readers. This is true, but it still does not help to solve the problem of this study, as the novel's social and literary narrative perspectives appear to draw very strongly on traditional frameworks. Remnants of the traditional cultural ideologies are still featured in the narrative incidents

specifically embodied through Dan's mother, Mr and Mrs Molamu, Stella's aunt and Dr Bodigelo's cultural beliefs. Monyaise's depiction of his female characters in fact shows little challenge of dominant cultural views and consequent modes of behaviour especially when contrasted to Mda's *Black Diamond*.

According to Mazibuko (2007:8-19) Mda's portrayal of female characters is thought provoking and resonant with his witty style of featuring both sides of the story. He comments on the challenges of modern day female characters that stand as innovative and interesting symbols, whether positive or negative. Mazibuko (2007:18-19) claims that Mda's stories are engaging and challenge the reader to ponder current affairs, to see the trivial daily experiences from a new perspective and highlight the value of a simple but inventive lifestyle. He is an innovative writer, who encourages inventive living (Mazibuko, 2007:19). An online review from Goodreads about *Black Diamond* describes Mda's book as a "clever" and "quirky novel", and asserts that Mda is the kind of writer who challenges South African stereotypes by skilfully displaying, twisting and undermining them through satire. Moreover, Hartmann's (2010) review affirms that Mda's characters are "deep and well rounded". Makatile (2012) classifies Tumi as a pervert, and describes her as narrow-minded and a money-chasing character, thereby foregrounding a twist in the portrayal of female characters.

As can be gleaned from the above reviews, Mda portrays his female characters as dominant and gifted spirits with the strength and power of creativity to invent new ways of living outside the traditional stereotype. Monyaise's female characters, by contrast, are generally made to conform to the traditional stereotypes; they submissively adapt to the traditional script. Mda's female character (Tumi) is a symbol of rebirth; she is notable, dynamic and unconventional (Mazibuko, 2007:19-20). Hence, the investigation is conducted to determine whether *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* is indeed departing from traditional stereotypical cultural ideologies, as Andrzejewski *et al* (1985) have claimed. Malepe (1974) does not further pursue the question whether or not there is a different or new perspective in Monyaise's portrayal of female characters.

In *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka*, Diarona is admitted as a TB patient at the Baragwanath Hospital. There is no prior background information concerning the cause of Diarona's sickness, except for the following cues in a statement to Pule, her boyfriend,

'Ke itheetse ka re wena o botoka; mme o se ka wa lebala gore ke fano ka ntlha ya gago. O no o tlhola o nkgoga, o nkisa kwa le kwa. Gompieno o lebetse. Go siame.'

(‘I assumed that you were better; but do not forget that I am here because of you. You used to lure me into all kinds of directions. Today you have forgotten. It is alright’) (My translation - NPQ).

The reader is introduced to Diarona in a vulnerable state of health and at the time when her relationship with Pule is ending. She has contracted tuberculosis and Pule is starting to lose interest in her as he is now attracted to Stella. From the framework of the quotation sighted above, the reader may infer that Diarona contracted tuberculosis from Pule. Moreover, since tuberculosis is contagious, the deduction that Pule is the one who infected Diarona is plausible, as Diarona continues to say to him,

‘Gonne Stella ke mooki, o ithaya o re ga a kitla a tshwana le nna’

(‘Because Stella is a nurse, you think that she won’t become like me’)

(My translation - NPQ).

The quote above is allusive of a clue to support the assumption that Pule is the one who infected Diarona with Tuberculosis. Since he is going to be in a relationship with Stella, he could infect her too, just like he infected Diarona. Diarona, upon realizing that Pule is a philanderer, chases him away and ends her relationship with him.

It seems that Pule has been the only closely related person who has been paying Diarona visits at the hospital. Her immediate family members are not mentioned nor do they visit her at all. It may be inferred that she does not have any friends. The closest relative mentioned is her elder sister, which may suggest that she is the only family member who is unmarried and possibly an orphan, because there is no mention of parents.

In contrast to Diarona, Tumi in *Black Diamond* is a healthy and bubbly person who has a positive outlook on life. She is successful in business and is helping Don, her high school boyfriend, to become a Black Diamond, which is an equivalent term for the modern day Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) beneficiary,

Tumi believes that if Don plays his cards well he can take over ... For Tumi, ‘playing the cards well’ means networking with the BEE dealmakers and using his leverage as an ex-guerrilla to outmanoeuvre any competition for the position (Mda, 2009:9).

The events of the narrative also take place around the city of Johannesburg, a space associated with wealth and black empowerment. Compared to Diarona, Tumi is portrayed as strong and successful. Tumi is financially independent, she owns property and she is entrepreneurial. For instance, she owns a townhouse (Mda, 2009:11), a car (Mda, 2009:9), and she is also paying

the deposit for Don's car (Mda, 2009:12). She also spends money on him and buys him clothes (Mda, 2009:12). She is the main provider in her relationship with Don, while Don owns only a cat and an "old chair" (Mda, 2009:12) of which,

By way of furniture it was his only contribution in the house.

Mda has questioned a typical script identifying the man as the main financial contributor. Female characters in *Black Diamond* do not depend on male characters to financially provide for them; this statement is echoed in Tumi's speech,

'Good for you, Maki,' says Tumi. 'This is the new South Africa. The sisters are doing it for themselves, as they say. You don't need a guy with big bucks; you make your own' (Mda, 2009:60).

Mda wittingly foregrounds his female characters by making them central to his narrative through their actions. For example, Tumi is always involved in something, most importantly her business ventures and bids. Compare this to the situation sketched in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* (Monyaise, 1965:51): Mr Molamu is the sole owner of the house,

Rre Molamu ke mongwe wa batho ba ba ikagetseng mo Mofolo.

(Mr Molamu is one of the people who have built a house for himself in Mofolo) (My translation - NPQ).

The narrator does not mention Mrs Molamu as the co-owner, which by implication means that she does not have any share in the ownership of the property. Diarona is also featured as not owning any property. There is no mention of her employment status, except for a brief reference to her involvement with a music band (Monyaise, 1965:24). Other than that, there is no significant initiative leadership role associated with her.

However, Tumi unlike Diarona, according to Hofstede's (1991:9) diagram of layers of culture, may be considered a hero. Most of the young and old female characters admire and look up to her (Mda, 2009: 22),

...kids wave at her...Older ones may remember seeing her picture in *Drum*, *Bona* and other magazines or on billboards when she was still a *modlara*, as they call models in Soweto. Even today she occasionally features in the newspapers and on television as one of the rising stars in business; the owner of a prestigious model agency with a whole new breed of models – even white ones – in her stable. Seeing her in the flesh sends the kids into a frenzy of excitement.

The portrayal of Tumi undermines the patriarchal and political order. Tumi is active in the public industrial domain as a leading and venerated businesswoman. Diarona is under limiting external and social circumstances considering the historical and social context when *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* was published. The time frame in which *Black Diamond* was published is different to that of *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka*. *Black Diamond* was published fifteen years post-apartheid and thirteen years after the commission of the South African Bill of Rights that allocated human, social, political, welfare, economic, and cultural human rights to all. Tumi is privileged to pursue the realization of her dreams without external restrictions. Furthermore, Tumi is free to live an innovative life in which she is able to practice her beliefs.

From a cultural perspective, female characters such as Diarona and Stella believe in practising cultural customs. For example, Stella after being attacked in her room says to Naomi (Monyaise, 1965:41),

“Sekwakwalala, mokaulengwe. Ga ke dumele gore malome o ne a tlhapisana masori a me”.

(Bad luck, my friend. I don't believe that my uncle cleansed my gifts) (My translation - NPQ).

Culturally, it is believed that performing cleansing rituals can prevent bad omens. Nevertheless, the belief in God is also practised. For example, Stella tries to pray in the veld on her escape after being tracked down by a dog (Monyaise, 2009:60),

A tswala matlho – Modimo, Modimo...thapelo ya gana go tla.

(She closed her eyes – God, God... the prayer would not come) (My translation - NPQ).

Stella in this scene is calling upon God to come to her rescue, with the belief that He will deliver her from this difficulty. However, the belief in God is not limited only to His power to save but also to inspire creativity. For instance, Diarona and Maria see the power of God's miraculous works as the inspiration behind the structure and architecture of Mr Molamu's house (Monyaise, 1965:52).

The Batswana believe also in the ancestors as the mediators and messengers between them and God. For example, when Diarona goes to visit Stella with the intention of killing her, she hears that Stella is in a critical condition, and she believes that the ancestors have a hand in her endeavours,

Fa Diarona a utlwa gore Stella o utlwile bothoko thata, a itse gore Badimo ba mo abetse Stella mo seatleng.

(When Diarona heard that Stella was badly injured, she knew that the ancestors had given Stella into her hands) (My translation - NPQ).

In Setswana culture it is believed that since ancestors are a connection to God, they disapprove of bad behaviour, such as offending one another like Stella did Diarona. They can therefore intervene and take revenge on behalf of the offended party. In this case, Diarona is the offended party. Hence, she strongly believes that the ancestors are contributing to her plans. Additionally, even after Dan's mother shared her experience and comforting words with her about how she managed to continue without Dan's father, as a single mother. She wondered to herself whether she had been listening carefully, because she believed that the ancestors were speaking through Dan's mother (Monyaise, 1965:45).

There is no mention of a particular belief in God or the ancestors by female characters in Mda's *Black Diamond*, except for Tumi's ardent belief in "positive thinking",

'[w]ith an attitude like that you won't get anywhere, Don. Positive thinking! That's what you need. I wouldn't be where I am now if it was not for positive thinking. That's one thing that people like Molotov Mbungane have that you lack: positive thinking!'

'Ja, positive thinking! That's the only way out, Don,' she says once more, her eyes daring him to argue with that.

Tumi is portrayed as optimistic and confident; she believes in making things happen, even if it means networking with people from high places like Dr Molotov Mbungane. That contributes to the development of the narrative (Mda, 2009:9).

Another valued cultural belief is marriage. In *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* the narrative is driven by mostly female characters, such as Maria, Diarona, Susana, Naomi and Stella's aunt who value marriage and aspire to get married. Maria was betrothed and her parents received bogadi, but she never got married,

A bolela gore o ne a batlilwe e bile bogadi bo dule...

(She said she was betrothed and that bogadi was even paid...) (My translation - NPQ).

When a woman gets married it reflects positively on the woman's parents and their parenting skills (Joyce, 2009:140). Hence, with this kind of cultural perspective Batswana women grow up in fear of being stigmatized as Mafetwa (unmarried women / the ones who are passed by) (Monyaise, 1965:6). Susana even goes as far as hiding the fact that she has a child from a previous relationship to her new boyfriend, because she fears that he might leave her when he finds out, which he does upon finding out from Pulane, Susana's neighbour, that Susana is a mother.

Due to her fear of being seen as a woman who has been passed by, Diarona wants to kill Stella in order to revenge her loss of Pule (Monyaise, 12; 23, 26 & 35). She perceives herself as a failure and does not see herself as a woman anymore, but Dr Bodigelo assures her that she is a woman,

Nnyaa ga ke bue fela. Ke bua le wena; o mosadi.

(No, I am not just speaking. I'm speaking to you; you are a woman) (My translation - NPQ).

Diarona a tshega. Nkile ka bo ke le mosadi, e seng jaanong.

(Diarona laughed. I used to be a woman, not now) (My translation - NPQ).

In Monyaise's narrative it seems as though being a woman is associated with being successful in a relationship, especially when it culminates in marriage. The training that a young woman receives from *bojale* (female initiation) seems to mainly equip young women to ultimately be suitable for marriage (Joyce, 2010:140). Diarona appears to be unsuccessful in her relationship with Pule, which by implication suggests that she is not suitable to be married, since Pule has left her for Stella. As a result, her feeling of worthlessness leads her to attempt suicide (Monyaise, 1965:14-15; 20). She feels useless and not needed by anyone, particularly Pule (Monyaise, 1965:21).

In contrast to *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka*, the female characters in Mda's narrative, particularly Tumi, do not seem to identify themselves through marriage. In the narrative Tumi and Don are an unmarried couple (Mda, 2009:22). There is no indication that Tumi believes in stereotypical cultural ideologies, such as being married first before a woman permanently stays with a man. In fact, Tumi is cohabiting with Don without her parents' consent, and Don has not even paid *bogadi* for her to confirm that he intends to marry her (Mda, 2009:12). Also, there is no mention of Nomsa or Maki having a boyfriend or intentions to get married. Rather, the narrative is moved by their desire for self-advancement and to succeed as independent women (Mda, 2009:59).

Tumi, unlike Diarona who seems to struggle to get over Pule, has always been independent from Don and even when he goes into exile she successfully goes on with her life. Tumi does not wait for Don while he is in exile. She gets involved in relationships, which she ends as soon as Don returns from exile to reunite with him (Mda, 2009:30-31). Even after her parting with Don, Tumi instantly recovers from the experience and happily moves on with her life, which is indicative of the fact that her individuality is not defined by whether Don marries her or not. She is a woman with or without Don.

This concludes the comparative study of Monyaise and Mda's narratives. The following is a comparative exploration of the main female characters, Diarona in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond*.

4.4 Diarona and Tumi in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*

4.4.1 Characterization through setting and actions

Diarona's characterisation connects with the negative setting at the Baragwanath Hospital in Johannesburg, which characteristically foregrounds her as a weak character who is confronted with a lot of difficulties. First of all, she is admitted as a tuberculosis patient (Monyaise, 1965:1),

Mo sejanageng ka tsatsi la Tshipi, ba tswa go feleletsa lenyalo la ga mogoloe wa matsibola, a kgwa madi.

(In the car on Sunday, when they were returning from the wedding celebration of her older sister, she expectorated blood.) (My translation - NPQ).

Her health is poor and as a result she is admitted to the Baragwanath Hospital. Her relationship with Pule ends as Pule is attracted to the staff nurse Stella with whom he eventually gets romantically involved (Monyaise, 1965:2),

Pule a gopola metlha ya maloba. Segakolodi sa batla go mmusetša kwa morago; ya re fa e e kete o tla boa ka morago a bona monyenyo wa ga Stella, a ba a itse gore jaanong o ile.

(Pule thought of the past times not so long ago. His conscience wanted to take him back; while he seemed to go back, Stella's smile flashed in his mind, he knew then that he was gone) (My translation - NPQ).

Diarona confronts Pule about Stella, and this makes the reader aware that Pule is attracted to Stella. As a result, Diarona throughout the narrative suffers from depression and she attempt to commit suicide (Monyaise, 1965:20),

‘...Ke sone se o neng a rata go ipolaya’.

(That is why she [Diarona] wanted to commit suicide) (My translation - NPQ).

The fact that Diarona has attempted suicide reflects negatively on her character, identifying her as a weak person, which challenges Monyaise’s conviction that women are always full of strategies, because clearly Diarona is incapable of solving her own problems (Pretorius, 1990:173).

In contrast to Diarona, Tumi in *Black Diamond* is portrayed in a setting that foregrounds her powerful nature. The urban region of the central business district of Johannesburg associates her with health, happiness and affluent Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) beneficiaries such as Dr Molotov Mbungane (Mda, 2009:9),

Whereas Don has long accepted his menial status, Tumi has never forgiven any of his former comrades for being successful beneficiaries of the government’s Black Economic Empowerment policy, or BEE as it is fashionably called, while her fiancé has to work for a security company.

She is herself an entrepreneur (Mda, 2009:59). She is in a relationship with Don Mateza, which has no indication of ending anytime soon (Mda, 2009:8). However, even when their relationship startlingly ends, because of Don who has developed feelings for Kristin Uys (the magistrate whom Don is put in charge to guard). Tumi manages to overcome the painful experience (Mda, 2009:186). Although her initial reaction is one of fury, she quickly recovers and moves on with her life (Mda, 2009:185-86).

4.4.2 Characterization through other characters’ perspectives

In this section special attention is on characterization through other character’s perspectives on Diarona and Tumi, and their own perspectives on themselves. Maria perceives Diarona as fortunate, because she has Pule who is giving her a lot of attention by sending her flowers and visiting her in hospital (Monyaise, 1965:6),

‘Wena o sego, o romelwa ditšheše.’ ‘O bua ditlhotlha.’ ‘ga ke bue ditlhotlha,’ a gadima mo o neng a tlwaetse go di bona teng, ‘ke gompiano fela di sa tlang’.

(‘You are fortunate, you get sent flowers’. ‘You speak nonsense.’ ‘I don’t speak nonsense,’ she turned to where she was used to seeing them, ‘it is only today that they did not come’) (My translation - NPQ).

Maria as one of the women who is portrayed as highly valuing marriage sees Diarona as prosperous. She has not been as successful as Diarona in her past relationship, since her prospective husband only paid bogadi for her and never married her (Monyaise, 1965:6),

‘Mong wa bogadi, motho wetsho, o bonywe ke ba ba dinaka’.

(The owner of bogadi, was found by those with horns) (My translation - NPQ).

As a result, her dream of being a married woman has never been fulfilled. And so, after Diarona’s break up with Pule she sees Diarona as a woman she can identify with, since both of them have had the same experience of being deserted (Monyaise, 1965:6). Hence, when Diarona tells Maria that she has gone to the hospital staff function with Dr Bodigelo, Maria is stunned (Monyaise, 1965:9),

‘O gakgamalela ditlhako tsa me? Ke letse ke ile modikwadikwaneng.’ ‘O tsamaya le mang?’ a botsa a atlhame. A akanya ka bonako. ‘O itse Ngaka e tshweunyana?’ ‘Bodigelo?’... ‘O a aka’.

(‘Are you amazed at my shoes? I [Diarona] was at the dance function.’ ‘Whom did you go with?’ she [Maria] asked with a wide-open mouth. She [Diarona] thought quickly. ‘Do you know the light complexioned doctor?’ ‘Bodigelo?’... ‘You are lying’) (My translation - NPQ).

Maria refuses to believe that Diarona has gone with Dr Bodigelo to the function, because everyone in the Baragwaneth hospital knows that Dr Bodigelo is a self-proclaimed bachelor (Monyaise, 1965:9; 41-42). Hence, Diarona changes her statement and tells Maria that she is joking. As a result, Diarona’s credibility may be questioned – she may be a liar. Stella also perceives Diarona as a liar, because Diarona attacked her and pretended to have lost her mind (Monyaise, 1965:37). Diarona’s declaration, “Ke ba reetse ka re ke molomo o manyama” (“I told them that my mouth is inauspicious”) (My translation - NPQ), supports the claim that Diarona is ruthless, because she cursed Stella and Pule’s relationship (Monyaise, 1965:8).

However, there is a good side to Diarona’s character. Stella, after being discharged from hospital hears that Diarona came to pay her a visit but was not allowed to see her (Monyaise, 1965:26). Stella goes to Diarona to apologise for being the reason Diarona and Pule’s

relationship ended. She thinks that Diarona is a good person (Monyaise, 1965:26). Dr Bodigelo praises Diarona by calling her a woman (Monyaise, 1965:49). He confirms his praise by marrying her (Monyaise, 1965:69). However, Diarona does not see herself as a woman.

In comparison to Diarona the community members in *Black Diamond* perceive Tumi as a role model. She is successful in her career as a super-model (Mda, 2009:22). However, her mother, maMolefhe feels sad for her daughter, because her profession requires her to starve herself in order to be as thin as a ghost (Mda, 2009:28). In Setswana culture a ghost is representative of emptiness and death, which by implication may be interpreted to mean that Tumi although successful and famous is depriving herself of life in full. She is continuously chasing after material benefit, which ironically satisfies her financially, but does not fulfil her whole being. Nevertheless the community members perceive Tumi, in comparison to Diarona, as a role model, because she is successful in her career as a super-model (Mda, 2009:22).

Tumi is adamant about her modern lifestyle. She goes to work for as many hours as she can “chasing the almighty Rand” and she does not feel inclined to do domestic chores (Mda, 2009:44). Instead, she leaves home chores to be completed by her part-time maid (Mda, 2009:44). Moreover, she insists that Don starts assuming a lifestyle typical to that of a “black diamond”, which means to stop cooking and start eating foreign food (Mda, 2009:45). Don, however, is confused because he knows that *ting* is her favourite meal, but Tumi insists that *ting* may be her favourite meal in Soweto but not where she resides; consider the following quotation (Mda, 2009:45),

‘You like *ting*, Tumi. We go to Soweto especially for *ting*.’ ‘It has its place, Don. Back there in the township. What if my friends come and find this foul smell? They’ll think that is what I eat.’ ‘But that’s what you do eat. That’s what we eat.’ ‘They don’t know that. That’s why we eat this kind of stuff in Soweto and not in North Riding. Here, as far as everyone knows, we eat sushi and the like’.

From the above extract the reader discovers the other side of Tumi that is pretentious, rude and fake, which stands in contrast to the qualities of a diamond, since a diamond is real. Her motives are dreadful, and she is selfish. She is more concerned about painting a false picture about herself to her friends. She is even willing to do it at the expense of her values and relationship with Don. She comes across, in word and deed, as an individual who is inclined to be degrading and insensitive to others. For instance, even when Don tells her that he does not mind cooking, she still demands that he must stop cooking and rather “cultivate more class” (Mda, 2009:45). Additionally, Tumi’s view of herself is pompous, as she credits herself for turning Don into a better person, echoed in the following words (Mda, 2009:68),

‘Your friends, Don, are sitting in the taverns afraid to go out there and compete with the mainstream society. Instead they are blaming those who are not afraid to face challenges. You’d be like them too if I had not taken you out of Wezile’s’.

Tumi does a good thing to discourage laziness and irresponsibility. However, her utterances depict her as a haughty person. She believes in herself so much that after her break-up with Don, she says the following to Don (Mda, 1965:187),

‘You’ll come back begging, but I won’t have time for you, Don. I can get any man I want, Don, and I am going to move on’.

Her attitude is indicative of self-confidence; however she is too self-assured and dictatorial, which may be perceived as her weakness.

Monyaise and Mda’s portrayal of female characters engages the reader, and they portray their female characters as dynamic with the potential to feel different emotions.

4.4.3 Conclusion: Portrayal of main female characters

Both Monyaise and Mda are prominent writers. In both novels the writers explore the social transition from the traditional Batswana and black community lifestyle to modern city life. However, of the two novels, *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* appears to be the more traditional. It still portrays female characters through stereotypical cultural ideologies. Monyaise and Mda both foreground female characters interestingly. Both writers react to current affairs of the time in which they are writing. Monyaise in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Mda in *Black Diamond*, mainly focus on the younger generation and the cultural and social trends of respectively, the 1960s and 2000s. In the 1960s professions such as nursing and teaching were starting to be recommended for females, particularly black South African females. Mda in his novel *Black Diamond* is also reacting to the development of the post-apartheid status quo of black South African females who are climbing the career ladder by being lawyers (Maki), successful business moguls (Tumi), and surgeons (Nomsa).

4.4.3.1 Features of the main female character in Monyaise’s work

Monyaise’s manner of narrating is reportorial as Andrzejewski *et al* (1985:640) state, but not critical of the stereotypical cultural ideologies. Monyaise’s characterization of his main female character, Diarona, portrays her as weak, supported by the unchanging surroundings of the main setting at Baragwanath Hospital. For example, Diarona leaves for a while to visit Maria upon her being discharged, and when Diarona returns she is back in the same setting.

Monyaise produces suspense through the use of flashbacks to keep the reader reading, basic narrative expectations are fulfilled and the main issues are resolved when, surprisingly Diarona finally gets married to Dr Bodigelo (Monyaise, 1965:69). Her revenge on Stella is fulfilled (Monyaise, 1965:68) and the truth about who Stella's attacker is surfaces (Monyaise, 1965:69).

4.4.3.2 Features of the main female character in Mda's work

Mda's main female character, Tumi, is portrayed beyond the conventional narrative perspectives. Don, unlike the traditional stereotype, is featured in a subordinate position as a bodyguard at the VIP protection services security company (Mda, 2009:8), while Tumi is a former top-model (Mda, 2009:22), and an independent and successful business mogul (Mda, 2009:59). Tumi in Mda's *Black Diamond* is not limited to the private and domestic domain; instead she is portrayed as hard working, a go-getter who is self-reliant, while Don is featured doing domestic chores like cooking and cleaning (Mda, 2009:43-44).

There is a shift of roles in Mda's novel whereby individuals are not classified in specific roles according to their gender. Mda's narrative is not exclusively about a specific race. Mda's narrative perspective turns the stereotypical roles upside down. The activities that are usually assigned according to gender classification are spread out between male and female characters. For example, Don who grew up financially providing for his girlfriend is now being financially taken care of by Tumi (Mda, 2009:24). Tumi, unlike stereotypical traditional black women, is not a full time stay-at-home female character who is doing domestic chores, instead she has hired a domestic cleaner to clean for her while she is at work, running errands or traveling across the country (Mda, 2009:44).

4.4.3.3 Approaches to narrative perspectives

Monyaise in *Ngaka*, *Mosadi Mooka* and Zakes Mda in *Black Diamond* invite the reader to become actively involved in the construction of the narrative by filling in gaps, exploring the unfolding of events and making cognitive inferences. Mda uses chapter titles to provoke script headers from the readers. The reader is not limited to the narrator or focalizing narrator's account, but she or he rather becomes actively involved in the narrative text by means of applying cognitive scripts to the unfolding events.

Initial expectations need to be revised at the end of the narrative events, because they become different from the ones that the reader has developed when they started to read *Black Diamond*. Mda's narrative is branded with constant elements of surprise. For example, the stereotypical gender roles are turned upside down, male characters are portrayed as meek and sentimental while female characters are bold and resilient; criminals are less daring and sympathetic (Shortie) and crime victims are less fearful (Kristin).

At the end of the narrative there is an element of surprise when Don discovers that Fotyo and Bova have been lying to him and when he decides to not reconcile with Kristin even when she is inviting him back to her house (Mda, 2009:207). Mda breaks away from the traditional “happy-ending”, and continues to open up the narrative for further questions even in its ending pages. The reader is left to complete the narrative, opening it up to further possibilities and constantly shifting perspectives.

Monyaise’s narrative by contrast contains little intrigue. All elements of surprise are bunched together in the end of the narrative where all the complications are resolved. Dr Bodigelo finally finds a suitable helper, in Diarona. As a result, the ending of Monyaise’s narrative confirms the hypothesis that Monyaise’s narrative still largely draws not only on stereotypical cultural ideologies to portray his female characters, but also on hackneyed narrative strategies.

This does not, however mean that Monyaise’s narrative is completely characterized by traditionalist perceptions. Considering the fact that his novel was written in the 1960s, he has gone quite far in terms of not slavishly following tradition. Also, Monyaise has relevantly responded through his narrative text to what history demanded at the time. However, in my opinion, Monyaise has not gone far enough. There is room still for improvement in terms of narrative perspectives on female characters.

Mda’s work, although not perfect in every sense, provides a model to aspire to for robust and relevant narratives (Molakeng, 2009:5). Mda’s novel has weaknesses with regards to style and structure since it was initially meant to be a film script. That has a negative impact on the pace and length of the novel as the narrator has to rush through to the end, because of the novel’s action packed nature (Ansell, 2010:4). According to Ansell (2010) Mda’s cast of characters consequently is limited and the accelerative unfolding of the narrative plot is episodic. Another negative review about Mda’s novel is that although it features female characters prominently it could be seen as demonstrating a typical perspective, because “Don lives autonomously” (Ansell, 2010:4). However, Mda’s novel is a powerful text in terms of providing its sharp commentary on post-apartheid and socio-political issues (Msomi, 2011:18).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

It is true that the majority of Setswana narratives are old, but that does not mean these texts may not provide rewarding material for both general reading and scholarly work. Setswana literature, however, seems to show insufficient adaptation to and exploration of current narrative possibilities and perspectives. As a result, Setswana literature may come across as uninviting to the modern generation of Batswana readers, because it appears that the themes of the writers, the writers' perception of the world, their subject matter, structuring, style and devices for character depiction are still informed by traditional narrative perspectives. Therefore, through introducing a comparative element into this study I have demonstrated possible ways of adaptation to and exploration of other and more current narrative perspectives to analyse Setswana narrative texts. The aim has been to expand research on narrative theory and characterization in the field of Setswana literature.

5.1 Findings

To achieve the research aims, I have conducted a comparative analysis of perspectives on female characters in D.P.S Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Zakes Mda's *Black Diamond*, by providing a cognitive scientific description of narrative perspective. With regard to cognitive narratology it has been established that both frames and scripts refer to stored data-structures used for presenting stereotyped situations. Frames are different from scripts in that they are used to characterize a point in time, whereas scripts are a dynamic sequence of events involving unfolding events. Moreover, the reader as an intelligent cognitive system uses knowledge to interpret the work of art from a specific perspective, relying on scripts in order to provide connectivity for understanding the narrative text. A script can be understood as an interconnected structure with a fixed and stereotyped chain of events unfolding in a specific context, whereby understanding is made possible by filling in gaps. The text invites the reader to make inferences and fill in the gaps using available cues.

A hermeneutical method has been used to show that a comparative investigation of more current narrative possibilities and perspectives is achievable. The research has shown how cultural narrative perspectives apply in the comparative study *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and *Black Diamond*, to determine how female characters, particularly Diarona in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* and Tumi in *Black Diamond*, are portrayed.

The research aim of showing how the main female characters in the two narratives are portrayed has been achieved by establishing the role of the reader as a cognitive intelligent system. The reader responds to the narrative text using stored knowledge to interpret the work of art from a specific perspective, in this case a cultural perspective, with recourse to cognitive

frames and scripts in order to provide connectivity for understanding. The reader actively responds to the narrative using his or her informed conventions of time and ideological insights to interpret and make sense of the storyworld in relation to the wider world in which he or she and the narrative text are historically situated.

The reader continuously shifts from one perspective to another within the work in order to create assumptions, to revise beliefs and make inferences from an already developed or stored frame of reference. Thus, stereotypical knowledge helps to reduce the intricacy and complexity involved in processing narratives.

The study has proved that the cultural Batswana perspectives on women may influence Batswana writers, because even with the social transition from the traditional Batswana lifestyle to modern city life, traditional perspectives on women persist.

The comparative analysis of the two main female characters explains that frames and scripts may be applied with reference to narrative perspectives. In the case of Monyaise's narrative, the cultural perspectives on Batswana women paint them as subordinate and dependent on male characters. For example, Diarona is portrayed as financially and emotionally dependent on Pule; she finds her life to be purposeless without marriage. Hence, after her break up with Pule she thinks of herself as less of a woman. By contrast, Mda's portrayal of Tumi is thought provoking and challenges dominant traditional views. Tumi is a modern day female character that stands as an innovative and interesting symbol of social transition. She is portrayed as dominant and gifted and as possessing the power of creativity to invent new ways of living outside the traditional norm. Unlike Tumi, Diarona is portrayed as conforming to tradition and to submissively adapt to the conventional cultural script. Moreover, Diarona is depicted as weak, supported by the unchanging surroundings of the main setting, which is Baragwanath Hospital, whereas Tumi is dynamic and strong. Tumi is not limited to the private and domestic domain; instead she is portrayed as hard working and self-reliant.

The study has shown that many of the traditional Batswana perspectives on women inform seminal texts in the Setswana literary canon, such as Monyaise's *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka*. Monyaise's commentary on the effects of urbanization on the social reality of urban women at the time is insightful, but his vision largely remains confined within traditional views. Some female characters in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* are typical stay-at-home mothers, while others work in the city. Although the women in Monyaise's novel are given an exceptionally strong voice, they are still featured as victims of abuse and betrayal. This is evident in the context of relationships, which Monyaise rather uncritically presents in terms of traditional norms. All the women in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* seek to be in a relationship or their lives centre on a relationship and wanting to get married, with the exception of Stella who is not interested in

marriage at all. Women in this novel seem to need marriage to survive and to provide their life with purpose. Some clearly act out of fear of being stigmatized as a *Lefetwa* (an unmarried woman / the one passed by).

Consequently, the study confirms the hypothesis that, although Monyaise's fictional exploration is conducted with specific attention to female characters faced by social change and the depiction of social transition from the traditional Batswana lifestyle to modern city life, his narrative perspectives, style and themes still draw on traditional views. It has been determined that Monyaise tends to produce stereotypical female characters, whereas Mda's *Black Diamond* not only challenges dominant views and consequent modes of behaviour, to the point of being highly controversial, but also expands the boundaries of creative writing.

5.2 New insights

It has been established that older narratives are not necessarily less valuable and revealing than contemporary ones in terms of learning about our communities and ourselves, as long as we are prepared to interpret them within their historical context. It has also become evident that literary theory, most notably cognitive narratology, can greatly enhance our understanding of diverse narratives, and of what lies behind our interpretations, i.e. frames and scripts. This may in turn encourage new perspectives and multifaceted interpretations among readers in general and Batswana readers in particular. Hence, literature certainly has a central role to play in imagining and inventing a life and a future, and in exploring the possibility of new perspectives.

Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka and *Black Diamond* belong to different historical contexts. The time frame difference creates a historical, ideological and cultural gap between the two texts, which consequently influences the interpretation of these texts with regard to ideological value-judgements, because norms by which literature is assessed are historically variable. The study has showed that both writers comment on social change. Monyaise in *Ngaka, Mosadi Mooka* presents the results of urbanization in the apartheid era, and Zakes Mda in *Black Diamond* responds to the less euphoric aftermath of the social changes of the 1990s. In addition, Mda reflects on contemporary avaricious attitudes towards material wealth in post-apartheid South Africa.

The study has demonstrated that cognitive scientific description of narrative perspective may have a significant role to play in studying narratives about the Batswana community in general and the lives of the Batswana women in particular. Certainly, the problems of women cannot be divorced from the greater South African context. Thus, throughout the study I have worked from the assumption that narratives can be regarded as socially constructed instruments for transmitting and transforming knowledge, whereby writers take the ordinary events and turn

them into defamiliarized inventions, thus inviting the reader to distinguish accepted perspectives from new ones. Successful scientific interpretation of a narrative involves interconnected endeavours of epistemological thinking, which may include taking cognizance of the explanation that cognitive science offers regarding fundamental matters, such as the role of culture, of social interaction, of emotions, etc. Therefore, the way female characters are portrayed in literature has a significant role to play in influencing cultural perspectives on women in and outside the story world, because the reader might consciously or unconsciously respond to the cultural expectations of their place in history to the dominant perspectives on humanity and identity in art and in real life current at the time.

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