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SUMMARY

This study is an analysis of Raditladi's poetry with special emphasis on three aspects, namely, social, cultural and the historical perspectives. Raditladi blends indigenous African and Western influenced themes and forms to portray the common and shared ethos, beliefs and practices of the Batswana. He depicts artistic and edifying mechanisms of his people's culture in remarkable styles. In addition to containing history and historical figures, his poetry also addresses social issues that are of particular significance to Africans who for so long have negotiated and navigated a world of contrasting social norms and values. For example, *Selelo sa morati* or a 'A Lover's Lament' highlights the tensions and conflict between traditional, Batswana versus modern, Western practices of love and marriage. The poem also raises the deep-seated problem of tribalism, and by extension, racism. In the poem, an attempt to harmonise contrasting ways of living, loving and composing poetry, that resonates with contemporary Africans, and their quest for social change is a recurrent preoccupation. Many modern Batswanas continue to attempt to harmonise their cultural values and norms with what they feel to be useful and relevant from so the called modern norms and values. It is a journey beset with fearful odds. Raditladi's poetry speaks to these everyday struggles we call life in the post-colonial and post-apartheid setting.

An important aspect of Batswana cultural identity that emerges from a reading of Raditladi's collection *Sefalana sa Menate* is the frequency of allusion to the significance of cattle. This significance that is manifested in considerable number of the poetic allusions or metaphors suggest a common view of cattle as nurture, sustenance, comfort, and possession of wealthy. Traditionally, cattle provided for the everyday needs of the Batswana, and in fiction as in real life, represent wealth and well-being. A strong relationship exists between cattle and the Batswana sensibilities. This strong identification with cattle by those who through countless generations have been shepherds is evidenced in cattle allusions carried forward in language, proverbs and poetry. Historical figures and

events are conveyed through poetic aestheticism. These historical events constitute:

- Leadership Lessons from the House of Kgama
- Teaching Batswana Poetry: an African paradigm
- South Africans in European Wars: Re-writing History and setting the record straight

Raditladi's work is based on life, lived as firsthand in the communal experiences of milking and caring for cattle as a child and this is viewed in the Batswana society as providing the foundation for understanding the Batswana sensibilities.

There is a gap in in Setswana literary criticism regarding a critical exploration of the three themes mentioned above been analyzed. It is hoped that this research study will go a long way to address this gap.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction and background

This research study is informed by Multi-inter-trans-disciplinary (MIT) approaches that cut across subjects, themes, concepts and ideologies. As would be discovered, this thesis is an embodiment of an analysis that does not only highlight the poet's literary skill and prowess, but also emphasises the values and norms of a people.

It is precisely for this reason that the study's aim is to explicate the social, historical and cultural identity of the Batswana as portrayed by L. D. Raditladi's poetry in *Sefalana sa monate*. It is also the objective of this research to make his poetic oeuvre more accessible to a wider readership. And finally, the study seeks to highlight the relevance of his work to the present socio-political context of the Batswana people in particular and the African people in general. It will be argued that Raditladi demonstrates cultural hybridity and paints a world of poetic contrasts in work so as to expand the horizons of lived experience for his readers. Exposed to Western education, many positive ideas and ideals are prevalent in his poetry, and some of them include aspects of his formal poetic composition that has received very little critical attention in extant critical works on the art of Raditladi. His work of art is also marked by the acquisition and assimilation of the ideals of Christianity.

At the same time, Raditladi has given much attention to the preservation of Setswana culture, history and literature through his poetic subject matter allusions, tenor and formal linguistic aspects of form. The African and Batswana influences and sensibilities that inform his oeuvre have not been critically explored in the existing literature that comments on his art, to date. The significance of this research therefore, lies in its potential for restoring dignity and self-worth to the Batswana culture, history, language and literature that have long

been marginalized, obscured and even suppressed by virtue of being under-discussed.

1.2 Author and his environment

Leetile Disang Raditladi was born the son of Disang Raditladi and Nkwana Ratshosa in 1910 at Serowe. His parents' home was situated at the Monamo Ward in the village of Serowe in Botswana. Nkwana was the daughter of Ratshosa. Nkwana's mother was Besi, the eldest child and daughter of Kgama III's first wife, Keaise. Thus, L D Raditladi descended from the Ngwato royal family through an internal marriage on the maternal side of his family (refer to Figure 1, House of Kgama) below:

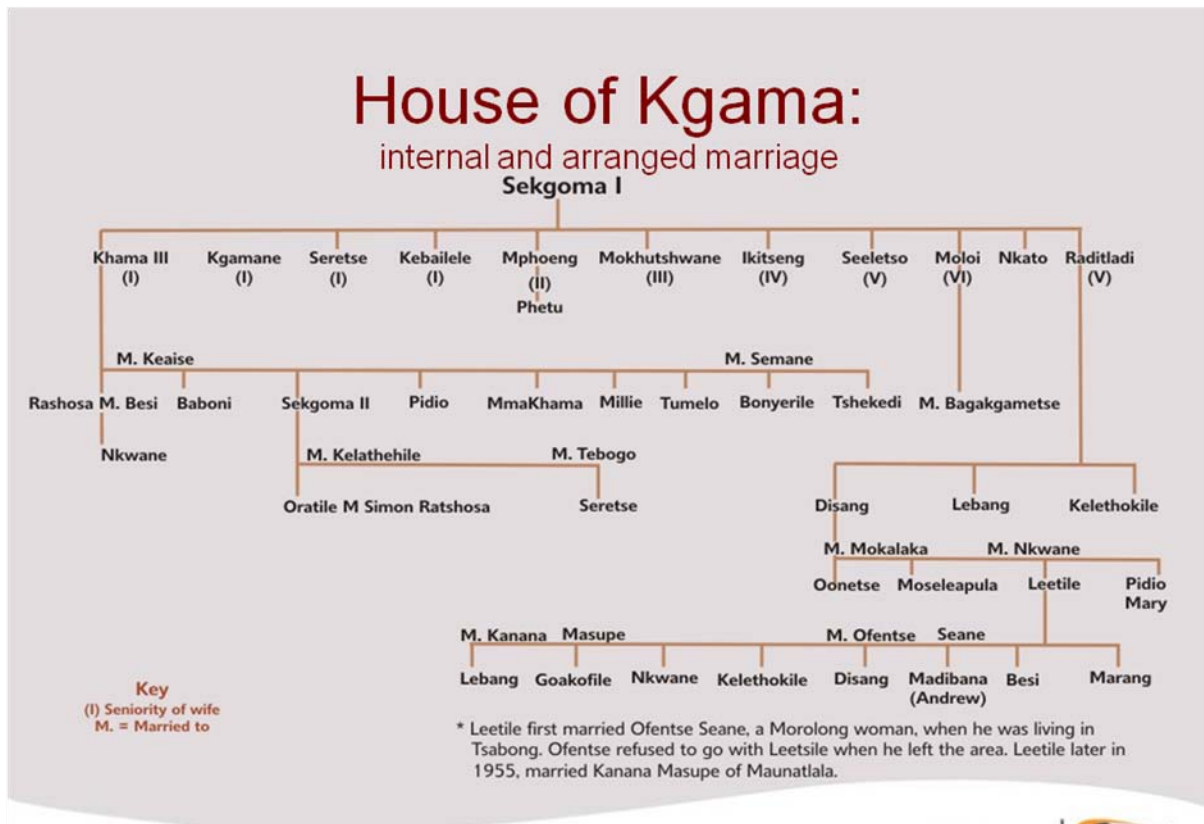


Figure 1.1

Source: (Boikhutso1985:2)

Leetile was the son of Disang Raditladi, grandson of Raditladi and great-grandson of Sekgoma I and his seventh wife. Thus he was a descendent of the Ngwato royal family through a junior homestead on the paternal side of the family (refer to Figure 1, House of Kgama) above. In other words, Raditladi's grandfather was Kgama III's brother. Leetile was therefore related to the Kgamas from both his maternal and paternal lineages.

Raditladi attended the Serowe Primary School and the Tiger Kloof Educational Institution, before proceeding to Lovedale College. He matriculated at Lovedale (equivalent to 'O' levels) and later enrolled for a B.A. degree at the South African Native College (later to become Fort Hare) in Alice, situated in the south eastern part of South Africa. Unfortunately, financial problems cut short his studies. Back

in Serowe, Raditladi readily stood out as a handsome, dashing young man compared to other Africans of his day. Raditladi had acquired a great deal of education especially at Lovedale where he met all kinds of intellectuals from all walks of life.

1.2.1 Conflict between Raditladi and Tshekeledi

Raditladi quickly ran afoul of Tshekeledi, the then regent ruling the Bamangwato. In 1937, Tshekeledi accused Raditladi of being the father of the new-born child of Bagakgametse Moloi, Tshekeledi's wife. Tshekeledi alleged that Raditladi and Bagakgametse were having a love affair while he was away from Serowe. A commission of inquiry was instituted to investigate Tshekeledi's allegations. Although the commission failed to provide any concrete evidence against Raditladi, Tshekeledi nevertheless proceeded to file for divorce and ordered a magistrate to banish Raditladi. Out of the twenty seven interviews that were conducted, only one respondent believed that the allegation against Raditladi was true. (Refer to addendum 23).

Raditladi denied all the allegations that were levelled against him. He was convinced that it was Tshekeledi's wish to remove all the members of the royal family such as the Ratshosa's and the Raditladi's, from the reserve in order to monopolise control over young Seretse, heir to the Bangwato throne. The Ratshosa brothers were also born into Bangwato royalty. They were the sons of Besi, eldest daughter of the first senior homestead (lapa) of Kgama III (refer to figure 1 above) and were of the first Batswana to be educated at the Lovedale College, in the Eastern Cape. Their father, Ratshosa, was Kgama III's personal secretary and was responsible for keeping government correspondence and private files. When Ratshosa died, his eldest son, Jonnie Ratshosa, took over his duties and remained as Kgosi's secretary after the death of Kgama in 1923. Jonnie served Sekgoma II until his death in 1925.

When Tshekedi became regent, all the Ratshosa brothers were removed from power. On Easter Monday in April 1926, the conflict reached a peak. Tshekedi had called Simon, Jonnie and Obeditse Ratshosa to the *kgotla* (traditional assembly) to discuss a dispute, but the Ratshosa brothers refused to attend. Tshekedi sent troops to collect the brothers and bring them to the *kgotla*. Humiliated in front of commoners, the brothers retaliated by shooting Tshekedi with their rifles, injuring him slightly. The Ratshosa brothers were consequently banished to Francistown (Morton & Ramsay, 1987:93). The conflict was exacerbated later when Tshekedi accused the Bagakgametse and the three Raditladi brothers (Leetile, Lebang and Disang) of bewitching Tshekedi's mother, Semane, and his sister Bonyerile. Again there was no evidence to prove his allegations. [There has been no reference of this allegation in the interviews].

In fact, the political conflict between Tshekedi and Raditladi began long before they were born. In 1894, Kgama III quarreled with Raditladi's father over the control of the London Missionary Society and banished his brother to Rhodesia (known today as Zimbabwe). In 1938, Tshekedi did the same thing to Raditladi and his two brothers. Tshekedi, who was convinced that his nephews were asserting themselves in an effort to challenge his rule, banished them from Serowe and ordered them to settle in Francistown. Tshekedi was a controversial figure and ruler, always in conflict with one family member or another. He played a significant role in the controversy over Seretse Kgama, leading the tribe's opposition to Seretse Kgama's marriage to a white woman in 1948, a saga discussed in chapter 2. It is not surprising that these conflicts play themselves out in Raditladi's poetry to be discussed in the preceding chapters.

Raditladi spent most of his life outside Serowe after quarrelling with Tshekedi Kgama, who was the regent at GaMmagwato. Rather than brood in loneliness over his lost influence, Raditladi looked for ways to utilize his talents. His quest for purposeful work took him all over the Protectorate, and his influence was felt

from the 1930s almost to the time of independence. Raditladi became a civil servant, a tribal secretary, a union organizer, a political activist, and a member of Botswana's first Legislative Council (LEGCO). This extremely busy man also found time to become one of Botswana's most prolific writers in Setswana. According to Morton and Ramsay (1987:97) "during the colonial period, Raditladi was the first of a breed of educated men and women who created opportunities for themselves outside their own reserves and sensed where the winds of change were blowing."

Raditladi was not a man who wanted to sit in one place. Soon after leaving Serowe, he was on the move again. For six years he worked as an interpreter for the Protectorate station in Tshabong. Then in 1944, he was transferred to Ngamiland to work in the Tsetse-fly department. His brilliance and eloquence soon caught the attention of Regent Pulane, who invited him to become the secretary for the Batswana Tribal Administration.

At this point, in the late 1940s, Raditladi became increasingly popular in the Protectorate. He represented the Batawana on the National Administration Council where he sat, ironically, with Tshekedi who had gone into exile in the Kweneng, and represented the BaKwena. By then, Raditladi was a well known columnist of the colonial newspaper *Naledi ya Batswana*, edited by Kgosi Lebotse. He wrote popular articles for the newspaper under the name "Observer."

In 1952, Raditladi began a new phase in his life. Because of the troubles brewing in Ngamiland, he left Maun and based himself once more in Francistown, where he soon became involved in trade union organization. He helped revive the Francistown African Employees Union, the first trade union in the Protectorate that was founded in 1948 (although it lapsed a year later). By then, Raditladi was

also deeply involved in the BaNgwato Crisis, and as the 1950s progressed, his thoughts turned towards party politics.

The first political party in Botswana, the Bechuanaland Protectorate Federal Party, was formed by Raditladi in 1959. In 1961, the party changed its name to the Liberal Party. Some White people -among them J Openshaw - joined the party. Openshaw became the party's Secretary General. The Federal Party did not oppose *bogosi* (traditional leadership) but wanted this institution to be reformed. They opposed the radically balanced membership of LEGCO because it encouraged racism in Botswana, and opposed the nomination of the African members of LEGCO by the African Council because they felt that the *dikgosi* would nominate only the persons they favoured, which they said was undemocratic. They wanted open elections by all adult Batswana. The party remained very small, as it was unable to spread throughout Botswana (Tlou & Campbell1985:28). In 1962, it disappeared. Thus Raditladi moved somewhat in tandem with and made important contributions to preparing the ground for the democracy of Bechuanaland forged by his cousin, Seretse, heir to the Bamangwato chieftaincy, who led the country to independence in 1966. Seretse had already broken with tradition in 1949 when he invited not only headmen but all tribesmen to vote in a historical *kgotla*. It was a particularly brave, yet a timely move, as he did so in the presence of his uncle Tshekedi, who ruled rather autocratically, typically suppressing the voices of dissension and opposition (Mbanga 2005:141).

Raditladi married his first wife, Ofentse Seane, in Mafikeng, but apparently Ofentse did not want to leave the Barolong area when Raditladi went back to Botswana. He later divorced Ofentse, after settling in Francistown. Raditladi had four children with Ofentse: Disang, Madibana, Besi and Marang. Later Raditladi married Kanana Masupe of Maunatlala and also had four children with her: Lebang, Goakofile, Nkwane and Keletlhokile. (Refer to addenda 2, 18 and 26).

In December 1959, Raditladi was appointed by the Ngwato Tribal Administration as the *kgosi* at Mahalapye. By 1968, he was transferred to Tonota where he formed the Federal Party at Serowe, but left the party after being transferred to Mahalapye. During Seretse's marriage crisis, Leetile supported Seretse because it was through Seretse's effort that he was able to go back to Serowe.

Whilst at Tonota he retained his position as the Subordinate Authority, and became a member of the first Tribal Council. He was also the member of the Legislative Council. Tshekedi came up with the idea of forming the Legislative Council at Mafikeng during the African Advisory Council (AAC) Meeting. The AAC was comprised of chiefs and both the chiefs and the British officials comprised the Joint Advisory Council (JAL).

Raditladi died at Mahalapye in 1972 after a long illness. Before his death, he went to many places, including Bulawayo, seeking medical treatment. While in Bulawayo, he underwent surgery but did not recover. At the time of his death he was still the chief's representative at Tonota and was buried at Mahalapye.

1.2.2 Literature and the overarching theme of autobiographical: House of Kgama & Raditladi versus Tshekedi

Throughout his life, Raditladi maintained an unshakable interest in Setswana literature, and as in Ratshosa's writings, the controversial Tshekedi had a profound impact on Raditladi's subject matter. Poems, such as *Motlhokagae* (a sojourner) in *Sefalana sa Menate*, centres around his conflict with Tshekedi as could be experienced in the following lines:

Ka bagaetsho ba ne ba ntsenya tlhalefo
Ba mpopela kgomo ya mmopa, ya lela
Namane ya yona ka ba ka e kotela

I was amused by my folk's accusations
 They fabricated a lie that turned to be true
 I also ended up believing it.

In these lines, Raditladi refers to Tshekedi's accusation in 1937, in which it was claimed that Raditladi had impregnated Bagakgametse and that the new-born child of Bagakgametse belonged to Raditladi. He was astonished by his family's silence on the matter. He could not grasp how his own uncle could accuse him of such a despicable act. He was perplexed at not getting support from the other members of the royal family and the BaNgwato people at large. To him, the BaNgwato believed his uncle's unfounded allegations, and the fact that he served his sentence by being banished from his fatherland, made him even doubt himself. He was framed in such a way that it was impossible to prove his innocence. He was not even given an opportunity to prove that he was not guilty. To make matters worse, even the findings of the commission of inquiry did not matter to Tshekedi. In his eyes, Raditladi was guilty as charged and had to go.

It is alleged that Raditladi wrote a manuscript in the early thirties about the despotic nature of traditional leadership, and that the manuscript was rejected on the grounds that it was an alleged personal attack on Tshekedi Kgama, with whom he was not in good terms. The reasons for the rejection of the manuscript are summed up as follows:

"There is not a particularly good feeling existing between the Raditladi's and Tshekedi Kgama. Should it be that Tshekedi took exception to this book it would mean that very few copies would be sold in his territory and there might be a similar result elsewhere owing to his influence" (Pieres in Gerard 1993:171).

According to Ranamane (Gerard 1993:171), it is interesting to note that the rejection of the manuscript was based, not on its literary merits, but on personal issues and material circumstances. The manuscript deserved to have been published because it had won a literary award in 1935. The officials of the Protectorate even stated that "any manuscript would fail simply because it was written by L.D. Raditladi" (Peires1979:169). The negative attitude of the Protectorate officials towards Raditladi most certainly retarded the inception and growth of literary writings in the Batswana language.

Raditladi's historical drama *Motswasele II*, based on the manuscript "*Serukhutli*" that won the Bedford Literary Competition in 1937, graphically portrays the despotic powers of the *dikgosi* (traditional leaders). According to Schapera (1965:43), it is evident from the history of the Bakwena that Moruakgomo and Motswasele were striving for the throne of the Bakwena royal dynasty. In the work of art, Kgosi Motswasele II is accused of being a dictator, an autocrat and totalitarian leader, who ruled with a heavy hand, took people's possessions without their permission and punished people without recourse to courts of law. He humiliated his family members in front of the commoners, took other people's wives, and later expelled them from his royal palace. He sought for advice from commoners who had no knowledge of governance and leadership.

Motswasele's actions caused instability and strife in the village and many people rallied behind Moruakgomo, a member of the royal family, to rid the monster from their lives. Unlike Motswasele II, Moruakgomo had leadership qualities such as bravery, vision and kindness.

Raditladi indirectly reveals his relationship to Tshekedi in the following lines of his poem, "*Baboki ba Dikgosi*" (**Royal Praise Poets**):

Ba re kgomo thokwana e a raga
Thokwana e ragile le bagami

They say the brown cow kicks
The brown cow kicked even the milkers.

Briefly, *Ba re kgomo thokwana e a raga* means that the *kgosi* (chief) is a despot, an autocrat and a cruel leader. He punishes people harshly, just like a cow that kicks the one who milks it; Raditladi, was persecuted by Tshekedi, while it is the role of the praise poet to reveal to the *dikgosi* (chiefs) the things that they are not doing right and to speak on behalf of the people who are being oppressed. Raditladi seems to refer to Tshekedi here, because his poem has echoes of Tshekedi Kgama's praise poem:

Kgomo e tsaletse nageng tubana
E tsaletse boMongolwane
Tshetlhana ya ga Kgama le Sekgoma
Ketiba ka tlhako ya mmaKgama
Bagami ba yona re ntse botlhale
Ka re bona e phatlhalatsa bakotedi
E ragile Joni le bomonnawe

A chestnut cow calved in the veldt
It calved at Mangolwane
The yellow cow of Kgama and Sekgoma
The hoof-stamper of Makgama
We who milk it are being prudent
For we saw it scatter the calf-boys
It kicked John and his younger brothers
(Schapera1965: 230).

The poet refers to himself in the line *Bagami ba yona re ntse botlhale*.

The poet is careful, as he knows Tshekedi will not take kindly to criticism, even though poets are expected to do so. The last two lines refer to Tshekedi's disagreement with the Ratshosa brothers that was noted earlier; he expelled them from office, and when they retaliated, he burned their houses and sent them into exile.

Allusions to cattle abound in *Sefalana sa Menate* and cattle imagery appears in twenty-one out of the thirty five poems. These allusions underline the significance and centrality of cattle to the life of the Batswana, and are closely explored in chapter three. Among the Batswana, cattle have been the lifeline through countless generations. There is an affective identification between people and cattle. Providing for the people's everyday needs renders the cow sacred. Cattle are inextricably linked to Batswanidentity. Cattle, dominates everyday life for their practical uses, and also inhabit and reside in the intellectual and imaginative sensibilities and sensations of the Batswana people. In their proverbs and creative works, the first object of association is often a cow. Historically and right up to the present, cattle are of paramount importance collectively, constituting an important portion of the national wealth. In the 1960s, Seretse Kgama, a pragmatic leader, viewed livestock exports as the most feasible and democratic basis for economic development since the majority of the Batswana owned cattle (Mbanga 2005:348). In the 60s, diamonds became the basis of the the economy as the country changed from relying on cattle farming to the lucrative mining industry.

Raditladi's poetry is characterized by rich imagery, parallelism, originality, profound thought and most of all, the spirit of the African people. It is not surprising that Raditladi should make great strides in his poetry. He learned the good qualities of traditional as well as western poetry, and has selected and

combined the best devices out of both, to produce unsurpassed works of art. His poetry captures the spirit of African philosophy and humanism, as the words of the Rev. A. Sandilands in his reference to *Bošwa jwa puo* aptly describe:

From West African music to rhythm, slowly combining, over bitter years of slavery, with European forms of scale and harmony, came the slave songs and hymns, the “Negro Spirituals”. Something akin is emerging here in Africa, and this book represents a stage, an aspect, of that process (Moloto, 1970:159).

Raditladi’s poetry blends the indigenous African and Western themes and forms into a true Setswana literary gem. Some poems, for instance, deal with history and historical figures (e.g. *Kgosi Kgama*, *Isang a Lentšwe*, *Kgosi Tshaka*). In “*Selelo sa morati*” the social issue involves the conflict between the traditional Batswana and the modern Western practices of love and marriage, and highlights the problem and phenomenon of tribalism. The solution that the poet offers is education. This poem is further analysed in chapter two. The poet is always at pains to harmonize the contrasting ways of living, loving and composing creative work.

1.2.3 Context of social change among the Batswana in *tshwanologo* and *fatshe la Batswana*

To illustrate the different dimensions of social change regarding the Batswana and Western cultural norms, two poems, *Tshwanologo* and *Fatshe la Batswana* have been selected.

In the first poem of his anthology, Raditladi introduces a theme that permeates his collection, namely the distortion brought about by the materialism of a foreign culture to the Batswana tradition. The title of the poem is appropriately designated; *Tshwanologo* means "contrast." Raditladi recollects the good old days, when African people were in control of their own destiny. This is the time when the African's creative aptitude was at its best. Africans were innovative and inventive. They designed and manufactured their clothing, shoes, hats, transport facilities, musical instruments and dancing gadgets.

Tshwanologo

A namane e tona tšhwanologo!
Diaparo tsa borarona di ile,
Go setse dikhai di re bofang mabogo,
Di re khinang di re šoboloke mmele
Ga re rate manyebi le diseisei
Malakalaka, diphatsimane thamong
Re neeleng dikoloi tsa rona dilei
Koloi tsa rona tse di gopang ka mpa mmung
A re newe matlhowa re ko re bine,
Basadi ba opele ba phanye magofi,
Leoto le sete, bo bine didumane,
Thokwana kgolo di benye le lefifi.
Re fe mpheetšhane setlhako sa bontate,

*Ka tsa direthe di re kgola mangole,
 Di re khwiga magwejana re sa rate,
 Di re soke menwana re nne digole.
 Keletso ya nna pitse nkoo ke pagama!
 Ke maatla ka etsa phologolo ya lekau
 Le fa e le ja photšhwana kgotsa kukama
 Ka boela kwa morago ka ijela mogau*

Oh contrast is an immense entity!
 Our father's garments are gone
 We are left with clothes [that] bind our hands
 They tie and bind our body
 We don't like shiny and silky clothes
 Sparkling, reflectors on our necks
 Give us our traditional vehicles, dilei
 Our vehicles that crawl on the ground
 Give us seed pots so we can dance
 Let women sing by clapping hands
 Let the legs hop, and the music play
 Let dark brown females shine in darkness
 Give us mpheetšhane our forefather' shoes
 For high-heel shoes will break our knees
 They dislocate our ankles and we detest
 They twist our fingers and cause impairment
 If wishes were horses beggars would ride
 Sojourning like a young animal
 A young duiker or gemsbok
 I went back to relish on poisonous bulb

In the first stanza, Raditladi reflects on the days gone by. He remembers the clothes they used to wear and refers to them as the garments of his forefathers because the manufacturing trade was passed on from one generation to the next. According to Raditladi, the dress was fitting and appropriate. By *Diaparo tsa borraarona*, Raditladi refers to *tshega* (loin-skin), *magabe* (reed-skirt), *motlokolo* (long skin-skirt). He remonstrates against the use of modern garments. He says that they are not suitable for Africans, *Di re khinang* means they tighten one's body; they make a person feel uncomfortable and irritate one. Raditladi disapproves of the Western clothes, which he says constrain bodily movement.

In the second stanza, he continues with his disapproval of the Western way of decorating the body with *manyebi le diseisei ... Malakalaka, diphatsimane thamong*. Raditladi is objecting to the Western style of body ornaments, which he feels should be replaced with traditional African ornaments. He declares that these garments are yokes around the necks of African people. The image used may also refer to imperialism and colonization. Raditladi is using physical objects, such as clothes, to represent his ideology and philosophy. He is appealing to the African people to go back to their roots, to stop following and worshipping a strange and foreign ideology. Before the arrival of the Europeans and other foreign inhabitants to the continent, Africans had their own norms, values and belief system that governed their way of life. Raditladi is calling for sanity to prevail among Africans, and is appealing for soul searching and cultural restoration. *Go bofa matsogo*, in the first stanza, confirms that Raditladi uses garments as a symbol to represent domination and enculturation. If one's hands are tied, it means one is not able to perform any function. One has no control over oneself or over anything one wants to do. If a person's hands are tied and his/her body is stiff, he/she will have to rely on the mercy of others.

Raditladi appeals to the traditional mode of transport, *dilei* (plural). *Se/lei* (singular) is made out of wood. To construct a *se/lei*, a very huge tree, with two big

branches emanating from the trunk, is chopped down. The small branches are then chopped off until a triangular structure that is flat and straight remains. Other strong sticks are placed across the two big branches, which are attached to the trunk. A big hole is made in the trunk and ropes made from the hides are used to pull the *selei*. It does not have wheels and therefore slides along the ground when it is pulled. A *selei* is usually used to carry big loads that need to be transported from one place to another. It is drawn by a span of two or more oxen. A *selei* can also be used to transport people who need to travel over long distances. *Selei* is easily assembled and does not need a sophisticated craftsman to build it. It was very popular among the Batswana. It can even be inferred that every cattle owner had his own *selei*.

Raditladi questions the Africans for relinquishing their own inventions and embracing foreign products. *Dilei* represent genuine African inventions; the products made in Africa for Africans. Manufacturers get the raw material from the environment, the people share what the natural environment offers, and use what is accessible in the vicinity. They use the technology that originates from exploring their surroundings, which is invented and practised by the people, passed from one generation to the next, and refined and mastered by its people. People will not buy cars but rather manufacture *dilei*. Unlike cars that are expensive to maintain, the *dilei* require standard repairs which only needs manual labour.

In the third stanza, the poet conveys his wish for traditional cultural expressions such as dancing, clapping of hands and stamping of feet. He longs for traditional recreation, which is singing, dancing and ululating. Recreation was part and parcel of the African or Batswana way of life. During the different ceremonies, such as marriage and graduation from traditional school, the inauguration of a new *kgosi* or ancestral worship, people always sing and dance. For example, the following song, sung by women returning from the first moon dance, which is performed to call the girls to their mophato (age set) and directed at those who

failed to join in the dance. The women proceed straight to their homes and they enter the village without stopping to chat. As they do so, they sing in rounds, one small group responding to the call of the others.

In *Fatshe la Batswana*, Raditladi highlights the tensions that are created by enculturation. As a sojourner, he was travelling from one place to the next. He also worked in cities such as Francistown and Johannesburg. At a time when he was writing his poetry, he felt as lost as a homeless person. Loneliness brought back the memories of his childhood in Serowe where life was uncomplicated. Raditladi thinks of his family and his friends. There is a strong feeling of nostalgia about his village and all its beautiful spots. The poem goes on to describe the cracking sounds of guinea fowl in the veld and the shrill sounds of cows, serenading him. The poem continues with colourfully dressed women dancing with *matlhoa* (seed-pods) strung together and tied around their ankles while they dance.

Raditladi is deeply emotional about his fatherland. His heart is breaking, as he longs to touch the soil of his village; he aches deep inside to chase the steenbuck and the duiker, to see the cattle and smell the sorghum in the field; he is longing for the meat of the giraffe and the eland.

Raditladi paints a contrasting picture of *Sekgoeng* and *Sekgweng*. The former represents a place where the *makgoa* or white people live. It is a working place for the Batswana or Africans. The Africans stay in cities while they serve their masters. After being exploited, when they are old and weak, they are supposed to pack their belongings (if they have any) and go back home. In the city they live in tiny compounds or small shacks. They need not feel comfortable, for this is not their home. The latter represents the village, which has forests and open spaces where people could dance freely. The forests have big and small animals, birds

and reptiles. People live in harmony with one-another and with the environment. This picture of pastoral romance comes out in the poem.

Raditladi is tired of the noise caused by trains, buses, cars, sirens, alarms, machines and hooters. He would like to listen to the music of the birds. City life is fast and dangerous, with many criminals. His village is quiet and serene, a place where people can think constructively in a quiet atmosphere. The contrast between *sekgoeng* and *sekgweng* has been well elucidated.

The phrase, *re newe matlhoa re ko re bine* refers to this burning desire to dance and hear the *matlhoa*, which is the traditional device worn on the dancers' feet. It is made of seed pods, and produces a beautiful and resonating, rhythmic percussion sound that blends very well with the movement of the dancer and the melody of a song. Song and dance are important cultural instruments used to communicate feelings of love, sadness or disappointment. Song and dance also communicate feelings of unity, separation or farewell.

Go bina dipina ka matlhoa means doing things the African way, according to Raditladi's text. He is objecting to the Africans wanting to become carbon copies of the Europeans. Before, during and after Raditladi's era, certain Africans worship Europeans and speak, walk, and behave like them. The poet is therefore appealing to the Batswana and Africans in general to go back to their roots.

In the fourth stanza, Raditladi is asking for the old shoes of the forefathers. Here he contrasts the old-fashioned shoes with those that are modern while still expressing the feeling that the old is better than the new in the present. He highlights the pain and discomfort of the present vis-à-vis soothing and the comfort that comes with identification with the images of the past.

In the last stanza, he translates an English proverb “if wishes were horses beggars would ride”, *Keletso ya nna pitse nkoo ke pagama*. He is capitulating, realizing that he is fighting a losing battle. He realizes that his wish is almost impossible. If he knew how to reverse the situation he was going to do that with lightning speed. If he knew how to bring back the good old days, he would do so.

Pheto (1984: blurb) in his novel *Botlhodi jwa nta ya tlhogo*, which could be translated as ‘A miracle of a head louse’, uses a different metaphor to convey the same idea:

Nta ya tlhogo e kile ya tsaya kang le nta ya diaparo. Nta ya tlhogo e ne e tllhabisiwa ditlhong ke bontshontsho jwa yone. Ya botsa nta ya diaparo gore e ka dirang go nna tshetlha jaaka yone. Gore e tle e re e nole madi, e kgone go ka nna khibidu jaaka nta ya diaparo le jaaka sethunya go le selemo.

Nta ya diaparo ya gakolola morwarraayo gore go botoka fa e ka tlhapa ka metsi a a molelo go kgobola mmala o montsho. Nta ya diaparo ya bolela gape gore golo mo go tla e thusa fa moriri o beotswe gonne batho ga ba kitla ba e bona ka bontsho jwa yone. Nta ya tlhogo ya ithabuetsa mo metsing a a belang go ikarapa. Ya swa. Setlhodi sa swa. Setshedi se se lelang go iphetola mo popegong e badimo ba se e fileng, tsela ya sona e nngwe fela – loso.

Upon a time, a head louse was having a conversation with a body louse. The head louse was ashamed of her black colour. She asked the body louse what she can do to be as tawny as the body louse. She wanted to do this so that after sucking blood, she should be as red as the body louse and a flower during spring time.

The body louse advised its sibling to have a bath of extremely hot water to remove the black colour. The body louse also advised its sibling to do this when

a person's hair was shaved because people would not be able to recognise her by her black colour. The head louse plunged itself into the boiling water to scrape its black colour. The head louse died. The lewd louse died. Any living being that tries to change its natural appearance – has one way to go – death.

In this story, Pheto is trying to teach his people not to abandon their culture and tradition. People who throw away their customs are committing suicide like a head louse. There is definitely a crossover between the two tensions, described as intergenerational and enculturation. However in the first, there is a harking back to the past, before the West restricted life and put people in bondage. In the second, there is a harking back to the life in the countryside, rather than the city, which is a life of bondage to blacks. The common denominator is that both works highlight interracial tensions. The two images denote colonization of the African mind. The lines signify a generation that lost its identity and designation. Molefi Asante (1994:12) asserts, among other ideas, that Afrocentricity means treating African people as subjects instead of objects, putting them in the middle of their own historical context as active human agents.

This means that Black people should stop emulating whites. Pheto and Raditladi questions the march of European culture, with its values and worldview paraded as the only culture and its values as neutral. Their conviction is that the African should be viewed as an agent, an actor in the story of history, rather than a passive observer on the sidelines. It means helping people discover how active the African person or idea is in a given situation, narrative illustration, or example.

1.2.4 Social change among the Batswana: 40s 50s and 60s

There were different aspects of social change for the West and for the Batswana or Africans in general. The West has intergenerational tensions but not

enculturation confrontations. Moreover, whereas racism was becoming entrenched in law for the Africans including Batswana in the 40s and 50s, racial desegregation was becoming legal in the West in the 50s and 60s especially in USA. A good example is that of societal norms for love and marriage expressed in Raditladi's poetry, which will be discussed in the next chapter

For the Batswana, "intergenerational" was the time of traditional marriages, arranged and internal, versus modern love relationships and choosing for oneself. On the one hand, at the same time enculturation occurs. Batswana marriage is a social contract between families versus Western norms which endorses individual person to person love characterised by public shows of affection such as hugging and holding hands. On another level, there was an emergent interracial conflict. This was a period of intensified white on black racism including laws entrenching racial segregation for example, the Mixed Marriages Act of June 1949, Immorality Act of June 1949 as well as the Group Areas Act.

For the West, and the USA in particular, "intergenerational" was an era when youth were challenging the authority of their parents by defying stringent sexual mores and experimenting with so called "free love". For the West, "interracial" is a period of civil rights struggles, especially laws enforcing racial integration and desegregation and giving equal political rights to Blacks. These ideas flew like sparks all over the world. Batswana society was changing from traditional to modern society, embracing western ideas and ideology through religion and education. Young people during Raditladi's era were challenging some of the traditional practices and wanted reform.

1.3 Research aims and objectives

The study makes a contribution in the following three respects. It:

- illustrates the cultural identity of the Batswana as a repository of knowledge and philosophy and the understanding of values, ethos and belief system unearthed by Setswana poetry
- demonstrates the social fabric that binds the people together, their behaviour, thinking, ambitions, desires, hopes and expectations
- indicates that history can be taught through a dignified genre of poetry. In short the study shows that whilst Setswana poetry is functional in its thrust, it also preens itself with poetic aestheticism.

1.4 Statement of research problem

The study is an investigation into three aspects of Raditladi's poetry: Social, Cultural and Historical. In exploring the three aspects, some literary devices, such as the Theory of Modern Criticism, as a barometer to measure the strength of Raditladi's poetry will be interrogated. Literary criticism constitutes one of the main poetic devices that give amplitude to the poet's compositions. From the many literary devices that are available, the researcher will concentrate on imagery, metaphors, symbols, descriptions and sound repetition.

1.4.1. Imagery

Poetry communicates experience and experience comes to us largely through the senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, and touching). Imagery may be defined as representation through the language of sense experience. The word image perhaps most often suggests a mental picture, something seen in the mind's eye and visual imagery is the most frequently occurring kind of imagery in poetry. But an image may also represent a sound; a smell; a taste; a tactile

experience; and an internal sensation."Imagery is best defined as the total sensory suggestion of poetry" (John Ciardi 2008, World Book Dictionary online)

Ciardi defines imagination as the mental laboratory used for the creation of images and new ideas while according to Ambrose Bierce (in Ciardi) it is a warehouse of facts, with poet and liar in joint ownership. Gaston Bachelard in (Ciardi 2008) says "Imagination is not, as its etymology would suggest, the faculty of forming images of reality; it is rather the faculty of forming images which go beyond reality, which sing reality".

A school of poetry and poetics made popular by Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell and H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) in the early 20th century that focused on "direct treatment of the thing, whether subjective or objective."H.D.'s "Sea Garden" is often seen as a good example of this style. (John Ciardi 2008, World Book Dictionary online).

Raditladi uses various images to portray his ideas. He uses landscape and sound (Aferika), affection (Selelo sa morati), emotion (bosiela) fantasy (kgosi Kgama, Isang a Lentswe) as well as inventive (Lewatle, Thamalakane). He also has a skill to blend western and Batswana cultural images to create new spectre.

1.4.2. Metaphor

According to Mcleod (1985:426), the term "metaphor" is defined as meaning "allegorical; emblematical; symbolic; or tropical." From this definition, it is apparent that the concept "metaphorical" is not denotative but carries an associative meaning and thus should not be interpreted literally. This clearly implies that metaphorical language is in all instances figurative. In this study, metaphorical language and figurative language will be treated as instances of

unimpeded flocculation, and thus will be freely interchanged for each other. Metaphorical language communicates ideas based on meaning transference, suggested by a pair of relationships between the signifier and the signified.

1.4.3. Symbols

A symbol may be roughly defined as something that means more than what it is. Image, metaphor, and symbol shade into each other, and are sometimes difficult to distinguish. In general, however, 'an image means only what it is; a metaphor means something other than what it is; and a symbol means what it is and something more too' (Paul, 2008:1).

For example, the gyre, a circular or conical shape, appears frequently in Yeats's poems, and was developed as part of the philosophical system outlined in his book *A Vision*. At first, Yeats used the phases of the moon to articulate his belief that history was structured in terms of ages, but he later settled upon the gyre as a more useful model. He chose the image of interlocking gyres – visually represented as two intersecting conical spirals – to symbolize his philosophical belief that all things could be described in terms of cycles and patterns. The soul (or the civilization, the age, and so on) would move from the smallest point of the spiral to the largest before moving along to the other gyre. Although this is a difficult concept to grasp abstractly, the image makes sense when applied to the waxing and waning of a particular historical age or the evolution of a human life from youth to adulthood to old age. The symbol of the interlocking gyres reveals Yeats's belief in fate and historical determinism as well as his spiritual attitudes toward the development of the soul, since creatures and events must evolve according to the conical shape. With the image of the gyre, Yeats created a shorthand reference in his poetry that stood for his entire philosophy of history and spirituality.

An example of a symbol in Raditladi's anthology is the poem *Selelo sa Tonki* (Donkey expresses grief). The donkey is making an appeal to be freed from the shackles of oppression by man. In this case, the donkey represents the oppressed people. Moletsane suggests that:

Looking at the place setting of the poet, an area where people own others as their servants who were maltreated just like donkeys until during the Colonial period when the Law started to protect them. The donkey in this case may be a Mosarwa, San. The human characteristic behaviour suits the San well when he makes his appeal to his master and to God (1983:9).

Raditladi was a cosmopolitan writer and a citizen of the world. He personally witnessed oppression in Botswana and South Africa under colonization and apartheid. He read about inequality and racism in the world. It is the researcher's contention that the donkey symbolises all the oppressed people in the world, for example, Bayei and Bushmen in Botswana, Black people in Africa and the diaspora, the Jews, the Indians and other people of colour. The donkey epitomizes occurrences like slavery, colonization and globalization, where the oppressed are abused and exploited.

1.4.4. Descriptions

According to Locke, "words, in their primary or immediate signification, stand for nothing but the ideas in the mind of him who uses them." Words, he says, are signs of ideas in people's minds, so the meaning that a word has is the idea it stands for in the mind of the person who uses it. Given the privacy of ideas, the Lockean view at least gives sense to the thought that when we speak we might be misunderstanding each other completely. (Wikipedia- encyclopedia)

Nor is this conception of meaning a mere curiosity of the 17th century. Here is Bertrand Russell's version, which looks remarkably like the cardinal purpose of this study.

You cannot understand the meaning of the word 'red' except through seeing red things. There is no other way in which it can be done. It is no use to learn languages, or to look up dictionaries. None of these will help you to understand the meaning of the word 'red'. (Wikipedia-encyclopedia)

Ferdinand de Saussure a structuralist, views language as a system constituted by signs that are arbitrary and differential. A linguistic sign consist of a union of two elements, that is, the signifier and the signified or the sound image and the concept. The sound image is its graphic representation and its equivalent or written counterpart. The signified is the concept or meaning. The sound signifies that which you hear, the meaning it evokes. That which we hear is heard is associated with something. Ferdinand goes on to say that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary, it is a matter of tacit agreement, not expressed in any form. It simply means that there is no natural link between sound image and the concept it evokes. Language is the signifier and meaning is the signified.

For Russell, the meaning of the word is precisely the object (i.e. the sense datum) with which one is directly acquainted in observing red things. Nor does he shy from the sceptical consequences:

People use words in various ways. This means that two words may be used to denote a similar object or idea. At times one word may have multiple meanings depending on the context. Two different words like problem and predicament may be utilized to label an occurrence. This makes language interesting. It would be deleterious if people meant the same things by words. If words did not have multiple meaning language would be naïve and impractical. The meaning of the

words depends on the nature of objects that you are familiar with, and since different people are accustomed with dissimilar items and ideas, they would not be able to talk to each other except if they assign quite dissimilar meanings to their words. Take the word *molotsana* for example. In its original sense it means a little witch. In modern discourse it is used to signify a charlatan, a swindler or a cheater. The same word can also be used to imply an astute, sharp witted and smart person.

Words are significant instruments to depict an idea, impression or opinion. All poets choose words from the same system yet they use words differently. Words in poetry are not strung together haphazardly but there is a definite pattern, that is, word order. Each poet selects words carefully to form a desired combination. The meaning of words in poetry is constructed by the reader. Words do not give one meaning to a concept but suggest different meanings to one idea. It is for this reason that one poem may have different interpretations.

1.4.5. Sound repetition

Literary criticism also referred as modern criticism will also look at the way sound has been used to create meaning. Poetic devices such as sound repetition serve as a musical aesthetic. Like all good poets of other languages, Raditladi has clustered related sounds together as a musician does to create melody in the ears of the readers. Whilst reading Raditladi's poetry, readers made numerous associations among words with similar and different sounds. Sound repetition in poetry can also serve specifically as a marker of metaphorical information in the sense that it establishes relationship between elements of metaphorical constructions. This will also extend to an investigation of how orality manifests itself in the sound of Setswana poems. A hidden assumption, on which this

research aim is based, is that' there is of necessity, a specific and strong relationship between orality and the phonic organization of poems which requires description. This is narrowed down to the specific area of sound repetition, which may be viewed as a manifestation of parallelism. It is widely accepted by many researchers that parallelism in general, and sound repetition in particular, characterise orality in literature.

Culture is a way of life, a way of thinking, of doing things and of expression which is learned or embedded in an individual throughout his/her lifetime. It manifests itself in the individual's behavioural and thinking patterns and is derived from the community in which he/she lives.

Not only does life express itself through man as a **social** being but the movements of life in the environment are also determined by the character of the individual. It could be asked to what extent the movements of life in society are determined by the character of the society? Bradley (1905:168) examines this principle from an evolutionary perspective as follows:

The movement of physical elements such as water is fully determined by physical laws. Water flows according to the principles of gravitation, friction, etc. When we turn to the animal which is vital, we see a similar determination at the vital-physical level, *e.g.*, reproduction, respiration, digestion, etc. But at its own level of vital life, there is little coordination among the animals, or organisation of the life around them. In other words, the vital animal is fully organised at the next lower level but only partially so on its own level.

Man is a thinking being. He uses his mind to articulate his desires. This can be seen with the social setting. Man's mind is not static but dynamic. It is ever growing, advancing and changing. As the mind matures the life of a society

changes. During Raditladi's era, the youth of his time were torn between Setswana traditional culture and modernity paraded by western education. The activities of Batswana society were subject to social and cultural restraints in form of custom and history. Raditladi as a member of society conveys the aspirations of the Batswana youth of the time. He transmits and expresses this yearning extensively through poetry.

While prose primarily addresses the intellect, poetry goes beyond the thought-mind and employs its images and rhythm to evoke sheer vision. Its aim is to make the thing presented living to the imaginative vision and spiritual sense. Poetry expresses the hidden and infinite meanings beyond the finite intellectual meaning carried by the word. For a revelation of life's deepest secrets and for the expression of spiritual truths, poetry is the supreme artistic medium. As with prose, there is an infinite gradation of types and quality among the world's poets. Here we will be concerned neither with the poets of imagination and subjective emotional experience nor the mystic poets of the Spirit. Our interest is in the great revealing poets of life among whom Raditladi is the supreme example. To borrow from Bradley's conceptual frame:

Raditladi almost alone among first Setswana poets seems to create in somewhat the same manner as Nature. His portrayal of the minutest details of human character and life is true to life and it is just because he is truthful in these smaller things that in greater things we trust him absolutely never to pervert the truth for the sake of some doctrine or purpose of his own (1905:168).

With a slight shift of emphasis Sri Aurobindo portrays the genius of Raditladi in exactly the same manner as Bradley:

... life itself takes hold of him in order to recreate itself in his image, and he sits within himself at its heart and pours out from its impulse a throng of beings, as real in the world he creates as men are in this other world ... It is this sheer creative Ananda of the life-spirit which is (Raditladi) ... Raditladi is not primarily an artist, a poetical thinker or anything else of the kind, but a great vital creator and intensely, though within marked limits, a seer of life. (1905:168)

There are different Setswana **cultural** aspects inherent in Raditladi's poetry. These relate to, for example, norms, customs, values, ethos, ancestor worship, upbringing and philosophic sayings. In Setswana, culture and marriage are inseparable as two sides of the same coin. In the light of this, marriage cannot be divorced from the culture in which it is being contracted. Marriage is a love relationship between two or more people, which is welded and legalized by certain cultural rituals or ceremonial acts that are highly held by the cultural group. Among the Batswana, marriage is legalized and contracted by the transference of bridal property called *bogadi* from the kraal of the groom to that of the bride. Hence Raditladi says:

Bogadi jwa me jwa wela ka lebitla
Tse di khunwana tsa fapoga Bakgatla

My bridal price was lost into the grave
Cows were turned aside from Bakgatla

Marriage is not considered a private affair of the couple in love, but an extension of communal relations that bind the two families together.

History refers to what has happened: the past events of a period in time or in the life or development of a people, an institution, or a place. It is the study of past

events and to be more precise, the branch of knowledge that records and analyses past events. Understanding orality is the vehicle of most histories, and Batswana without exception. In his poetry Raditladi draws from both the recorded and oral evidence. In a poem *Ntwa ya 1939–45* he gives a good account of an entanglement that affected the whole world:

Go kile ga tsoga leruuruu maloba
Leruuruu la marumo le dikanono

Once upon a time entanglement erupted
Entanglement of bullets and cannons

The persona in the poem describes the causes of war as well as the event itself. He says Germany was the sole instigator of the world war. Germany and her allies were defeated and later paid a big price. Many innocent souls lost their lives. World leaders indulged in the total destruction of the world driven by greed and power.

Another striking historical poem is *Kgosi Tšhaka*. The poem is based on Shaka's history. It is interesting to note that the history of Shaka is documented in all forms of literature in all African languages almost without exception. The legacy of Shaka spearheaded an outpouring of the most outstanding poetry in Africa and Raditladi was not to be outdone:

Tšhaka ya rema dikgata tsa batho
Ya phunya mogodu wa lesea tharing

The spear crushed people's skulls
It pierced baby's stomach in the cradle

Shaka moulded the previously insignificant Zulu tribe into a mighty war machine. He introduced new systems of fighting, abandoning the long throwing spears and introducing the far more lethal short handled broad-bladed *assegai*. He compelled his men to throw away their sandals and to harden their feet. His regiments (*impis*) were compelled to dance on thorns, and if anyone showed pain they were immediately executed. Shaka trained his men to fight as a cohesive unit, in the shape of cattle horns. The most experienced troops were at the head to gore, and the younger warriors were put on the horns to encircle the enemy. The Zulu were trained to rush straight in for the kill. They overwhelmed every tribes they came across and annihilated them.

Many of the young women and young boys from these defeated tribes were amalgamated into the Zulu tribe, but the older people and warriors were killed. Although Raditladi was a member of the royal family he did not shy away from criticising the institution. According to him, Shaka like Tshekedi were dictators who abused their powers and displaced many innocent people in the process. Like Mussolini and Hitler, Shaka killed innocent people. Chaka was mercilessly driven by greed and yearning for power and control.

1.5 Rationale for the research

South Africa is the last country in the continent to gain political liberation. The people celebrate this achievement as an important part of what they have to do as a people to fashion their national identity and to formulate an image of ourselves, refusing to be defined by others. The people have to respect them and have the common resolve to achieve national reconciliation and national and social cohesion.

This research is in part responding to former president Thabo Mbeki's call that:

As an important part of this, each of our language and cultural groups should make an effort not only to understand itself, its language, culture and customs, but also the languages, cultures and customs of the other compatriot formations, so that our shared understanding of one another serves as the cement we need to bond our new nation.
<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2007/text/at38.txt>

Mbeki continues to explain the current state of affairs by saying:

Quite correctly, many in our country have expressed concern about the place of the African languages in our society. This relates to such important matters as mother-tongue instruction in our schools, the study of African languages at the school and university levels, publication of books and magazines in the African languages, the further development of these languages for use as media of instruction at higher levels of education, multi-lingualism, the use of indigenous languages in our state institutions, in the public discourse and public communication, and so on”
<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/anctoday/2007/text/at38.txt>

There is no doubt that, as part of the process of our redefinition of ourselves, we must do everything possible to spread knowledge of literature and other material written or recorded in the African languages since this material began to be published in our country from the beginning of the 19th century. Among other things, this would expose all of us to important lessons about how the traditional value system of ubuntu, and the sense of identity and self-pride among the oppressed, respond to colonial and apartheid domination through the period from at least the 18th to the present century. It is critically important that we open our ears and our minds to what the victims of this domination, the inheritors of the value

system of ubuntu, said with regard to all these matters, in their own languages. (<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/ancoday/2007/text/at38.txt>)

This research is aimed at exploring how Raditladi achieves the need to exploit African languages in order to further the goals of African ubuntuism.

The promotion and development of a language also implies the promotion of culture, and in the African context, restoration of dignity and pride in being African. It is this restoration that is frequently implied in articulations of African Renaissance. Pixley Isaka Seme made an impassioned speech 's 1905 speech.

that reminds one of a traditional African poem. He depicts the physical appearance of Africa with its hills and plains, its forests and dessert plains as well as its brightening sun. He recounts Africa's rich history by alluding to great civilizations of Nubia, Kush and Kemet. He states Africa's scientific and technological achievements of pyramids in Egypt and Ethiopia. This is a reminder that education started in Africa and that first Greek philosophers studied in Egypt under Africans. In short he is reminding westerners about the stolen legacy.

Seme's elocution illuminates bondage, slavery and colonization that did not deter Africans from their desire to enlighten the world. He continues to show developments from past to present just like a traditional African poet. He uses repetition, parallelism and linking to fortify his arguments. Like a true African he selects appropriate sounds, onomatopoeic words and rhyming phrases to state the history of the African people.

In his rendition he alludes to cultural and social variables that wrapped the African people. There was a rapid increase of churches, schools and universities as well as innovations in the field of commerce and business. African leaders were giving direction and vision in the quest to refine Africa's mission of rekindling and educating the world like their forefathers did.

"These monuments are the indestructible memorials of their great and original genius. It is not through Egypt alone that Africa claims such unrivalled historic achievements. I could have spoken of the pyramids of Ethiopia, which, though inferior in size to those of Egypt, far surpass them in architectural beauty; their sepulchres which evince the highest purity of taste, and of many prehistoric ruins in other parts of Africa. In such ruins Africa is like the golden sun, that, having sunk beneath the western horizon, still plays upon the world which he sustained and enlightened in his career...The brighter day is rising upon Africa. Already I seem to see her chains dissolve, her desert plains red with harvest, her Abyssinia and her Zululand the seats of science and religion, reflecting the glory of the rising sun from the spires of their churches and universities." (Regeneration of Africa, 1906:10).

Prixley Isaka Seme's "Regeneration of Africa" speech given in 1905 while he was studying at the University of British Columbia, is a good example of tone and the lyricism of words which can create a mood and evoke feelings. The **music** of the speech conveys the **feeling** of grandeur, inspiration, greatness, achievement, "civilisation" as well as a love for and belief in the innate greatness and potential of his beloved Africa. Pride in being African can be expressed in many ways, such as lyricism, which evokes a mood and an atmosphere. It can be expressed in creative works, such as poetry. Raditladi is one of the first generation of writers of creative works in Setswana.

The works of Raditladi are a powerful, and captivating and a showcase of African story telling at its best; dramatic, proverbial, metaphorical and lyrical. Raditladi deals with experiences hardly touched in African language literature. This poetic works, and therefore, offers the kind of material that can rekindle reading interest. The poet also put Setswana writing on a par with the very best nationally and internationally. His works even inspires others to explore similar territories in African languages writing.

Okot p' Bitek opines that:

African writers who choose English or French set themselves certain problems. They wish to express African ideas, but they have chosen a non-African tool to express them. There is a grave danger that with the tool of language they will borrow other foreign things. Every language has its own stock of common images expressing a certain people's way of looking at things. Every language has its own set of literary forms which limit a writer's manner of expression. How many of these tools can a writer borrow before his African ideas are affected by the influence of foreign ideas implied in them? (1972:1)

The above strong nationalistic statement is reminiscent of Raditladi's creative exploits. As was common during his time he could have chosen to write in English, but he was aware of the significance of his language, of writing in Setswana. His poem '*Tshwanologo*' gives a clear message to Africans to be proud of their cultural heritage, and not imitate other nations. It is seen from the introduction as well as from interviews with the respondents that Raditladi was very eloquent in English. Being one of the few educated people of the time and still choosing to write in a language of the people, speak volumes of the kind of person he was. Many of his kind wrote in English and other Colonial languages, claiming that they wanted to reach a broader community. His works were proof that he was practising what he was preaching.

The theoretical underpinnings of this research are drawn mainly from postcolonial theories as found and expressed in Homi Bhabha's (1994), Edward Said's (1993) and Robert Young's (1995) articulations of hybridity. These theories emphasise the project of renegotiating cultural identities at the moment of articulation and retrieving the unrepresented pasts that haunt the present. The appeal of the

theory is that it gives rhetorical agency to formerly disadvantaged and marginalized Batswana communities, allowing them to become subjects of their history, and reformulate their distorted histories into the present.

Nowhere in Setswana poetry studies have the three aspects mentioned above been treated in the manner this study purports to do. The gap the research attempts to bridge is to provide new reading of Raditladi's works particularly in a context where the project of African decolonization is both celebrated for bring political independence but also criticised for limiting the benefits of independence to a few people. It is hoped that the exploration of this dialectical reality breaks new grounds in the study of Setswana poetry.

1.6 Research design and methodology

The research will describe, analyse and interpret extracts from Raditladi's poetry by borrowing tools freely from the various literary theories. Moreover, the researcher shall not stand or fall by the tools he chooses to employ. The intention of the researcher is to try, as much as possible, to allow the works themselves to reveal their own aestheticism. After all, the researcher is convinced that aestheticism is by and large culture bound. In this way, the research will add to the pool of universal principles of literary criticism.

The intent is to move away from the Eurocentric subservience to method and choose methodologies that do not impose European lens on African material. The quest for methods in afrocentric scholarship is still new because the need to define an African aesthetic, for example, betrays the continuous dislocation of Africans from their own peculiar and collective centres (Mazama 2003:220)

The study focuses on literary appreciation of Raditladi's poetic imagination as could be deduced from the central analytical construct, which is the natural,

social and historical environments of the Batswana in Botswana. There is some crossover into the disciplines of history and cultural studies. White and Vail (1991) observe that when a large number of African countries achieved independence in the fifties and sixties, the field of Anthropology, which had been focusing on kinship systems and individual “tribes” was ill-equipped to explain the emergence of the nation state, and the discipline of history stepped in and came to the fore. In recent decades the two fields of inquiry have been converging and, according to Vail and White, have come a long way in debunking the myth of an African inhabited by primitive, pre-rational, pre-industrial “oral” man, incapable of serious intellectual activity, a myth which they contend persists in the field of literacy criticism due to oral dichotomy (Vail and White 1991:1).

1.7 Literature review

The review of Literature will be divided into two distinct parts so that each could be analysed separately. The first part will concentrate on social change in South Africa in the past seventy years and the second will look at the research done on Raditladi's works.

1.7.1 Context of social change among the Batswana between 1940 and the present

It is important to take a momentary look at the history and politics of writing in the African languages in South Africa. This information will give the reader a wide scope in terms of depicting the themes of poverty, destruction and loss of family as well as cultural degeneration during the time of apartheid. It also places Raditladi within a broader context of Setswana literature other than just poetry and provides up to date information about recent Setswana literature. It also portrays a brief history of apartheid in how it affected the development of South African literatures in the vernacular. The themes discussed relate to

- **Intergenerational, e.g. societal norms for love and marriage traditional marriages, arranged and internal, versus modern love relationships and choosing for oneself.** *Monyaise*. Ngaka Mosadi Mooka focuses on the intimate relationships of the modern young generation which has caused societal problems as the youths now have the option of choosing their own lovers. In *Bogosi* Kupe, the author, dwells on the marital problems emanating from the parents' insistence on choosing lovers for their children.
- **Enculturation e.g. societal norms for love and marriage.** Batswana marriage, a social contract between families versus Western norms: individual person to person love; public shows of affection such as hugging and holding hands e.g. *Monyaise* (1976) illuminates Western civilisation, which the author blames for denting the cultural image of blacks living in white urban areas. As poverty (caused by among others the Land Act of 1913) was already pervasive among black South Africans, many of these works depict droves of blacks in the process of migrating to white urban areas in an attempt to earn a livelihood. Moroke (1960,1962) and *Monyaise* (1975,1983) are the forerunners in this cause, even though the black South Africans' quest to migrate to white cities is portrayed differently in each of these books.

A good example of this scenario is in the main character Rammone in *Seboni* (1983), which is noted for its industrious efforts in trying to portray this migration, leaves his rural home for the white urban areas where, upon his arrival there, he is perplexed by the modern city life. In *Sephaphathi*, the main character, Sephaphathi, sneaks out of his *kononyane* (rural home) and arrives in Bloemfontein in his quest for the much-vaunted modern city life. By the same token, Rammone turns his back on his Kgalagadi home to seek greener pastures in Gauteng. In a stark contrast to *Sephaphathi*, who becomes an intellectual,

Rammone gains knowledge of real life issues and becomes streetwise. The various Setswana works exploit poverty-stricken characters to portray the migration of blacks to white urban areas. These characters are influenced by the predominantly glitzy appearances of the urban cities which contrast sharply with the poor living conditions of the rural areas. They include Sephaphathi, Ranamane and Digopoleng whose aims were to return home after they had become rich.

Ba ne ba gopola gore ba tla tlatsa madi ka dikgetse le mo dipolokelong[savings account] tsa poso,mme ba tla reka dimmotorokara tse dintle,tse di phatsimang, mme e tle e re ka letsatsi lengwe fa batho ba Kononyane ba ntse ba itebetse [without thinking/suddenly],ba bone ba tsena ka motse ba na le basadi ba bantle le bana ba ba botlhale ba ba buang tšhomi [a foreign language] (1960:11).

They had intended to fill bags and their accounts in post offices with cash, with which they would buy spanking new cars. Then they would travel together with their newly-wed wives and children back home to Kononyane, where the locals would be surprised to see their wives and children speaking a foreign language.

Before he leaves for Kimberley, Kgonamanaba, the main character in *Lehufa le lwa le thuto*, is greatly enthused over comments that he could acquire a "firearm and a Bible" with either cash or cattle. Unlike Rammone and Sephaphathi, who migrate to the urban areas in an effort to enrich themselves, Kgonamanaba, who is the least poor of the two, acquires only a firearm and a Bible for himself.

Kwa Teemaneng batho ba reka ditlhobolo le Buka e kgolo fa ba na le madi kgotsa dikgomo(1962:5)

- **Interracial,** Period of intensified white on black racism including laws entrenching racial segregation e.g. societal norms for love and marriage; The Mixed Marriages Act June 1949 and Immorality Act June 1949; The Group Areas Act. The authors of this period differ drastically from the authors of the period of Moloto and his co-authors because the principles of the Setswana literature had been established when Monyaise and his colleagues started their literary careers. All they needed to do, was to produce literature with great creativity. The literary intention of Moloto, Seboni and Raditladi was to produce *ditlhangwa* (dramas), uphold the principles of the standard Setswana language, and chronicle historical events. While Monyaise's sole interest in the Setswana literature was to demonstrate the literary richness of the Setswana language, this does not imply that Moloto and his colleagues had exhausted their literary inspirations. But, political developments had had a detrimental effect on the freedom of expression. The government had cracked down on authors who were suspected of disseminating subversive literature, especially publications containing anti-government sentiments. Many authors consequently became disaffected by the government moves to curb their freedom of expression. And those authors who had made freedom of expression their literary cause, had often invoked the wrath of government. The literary era of Moloto and his co-authors was marred by intense repression, with publishers and government censors wielding draconian powers over the publishing sector. Government censors and publishers exercised their sole discretion over the publishing of literature. The development of the Setswana literature lost its momentum during the period of Monyaise and his colleagues, and those authors who survived the censorship repression had to draw a veil over their literary work, even in issues that deeply affected their own lives.

Mothoagae's book *Mpherefere*, highlights the conflicting relations between white farmers and their black counterparts, as well as the dehumanising treatment meted out to black farm employees by white farmers. One black farmer, Papiso, buys land in the area of Metsimotlhabe, which was in the neighbourhood of farms owned by die-hard ultra-rightwing white farmers. Papiso lived nearby the white farming community at a time when black's human rights were ferociously violated by whites through the institutionalised policy of apartheid and racial oppression. By farming near them, he was rubbing salt into the white farmers' wounds. Papiso and his neighbour Kukumuru, subsequently became bitter enemies. But to the surprise of all and sundry, Kukumuru's son, Willem became intimate with Papiso's daughter Bonolo. The two fell head over heels in love with each other in an intimate relationship that transcended traditional racial beliefs and customs. In a development that sparked a torrent of sorrows and tribulations, it emerged that Bonolo was pregnant. And in a rare tragedy, shortly before she died, Bonolo gave birth to the pair's twins Bontleeng and Tuelo. Tempers flared when the Kukumrus learnt of this unprecedented incident, which degenerated into mayhem. The incident escalated into a violent backlash when Kukumuru and his family, as well as his friends, lynched Papiso's oldest son Kgothatso.

The worst tragic incident that befell Papiso was when his entire family was torched to death by Kukumuru and a lynch mob of white farmers when the twins were thirteen years old. Tuelo cheated death, however. He fled and surfaced in the village of Lokaleng where he was warmly welcomed by Gontekile and his wife Mogomotsi. While Tuelo was recovering from his hardships amid the bad treatment from his new-found mother Mogomotsi, Lefiso spread rumours that Mogomotsi was actually abusing Tuelo. The local chief, Ketshwerebothata, issued a directive requiring that Tuelo

should forthwith live with Lefiso, who would seemingly treat him more humanely. Contrary to expectations, Tuelo was cruelly treated by Lefiso's family and he became a hard wolf in sheep's clothing. At the height of his hardened conduct, he turned into a serial rapist and subsequently raped Diago and Keloapere who eventually became pregnant. Thereafter, Tuelo set off on a spate of indiscriminate rapes, raping boys and girls, women and men, ageing women and men regardless of sex. The most severely inflicted victims of this scourge of rape were Tsatsi and Lefiso.

Tuelo's true character was exposed when he was arrested following his botched rape on Lefiso. He was captured by Radinamane and Dikgetse who came to visit in Lokaleng from Seleka in Botswana. The community had attributed the string of rapes Thuso but eventually got to know the real perpetrator.

1.7.2 Review works concerning literary criticism of Raditladi's works

Manyaapelo (1998) focuses on Raditladi's use of metaphor in three poems; *Loso*; *Bosiela* and *Motlhabani*. The study investigates the role of metaphor in connecting unrelated experiences in life. The research provides a description of how metaphor is constructed in several ways, using language and elements drawn from people's experiences of life. Manyaapelo looks at the traditional and modern symbols which the poet uses.

The research does bring an important element of "metaphorization", as indicated, but did not go far enough to expartiate the relationship and differences between traditional and modern symbols and how the symbols complement or spoil the author's intended meaning.

Von Staden's study '*Beeldspraak in Sefalana sa Menate Van L.D. Raditladi*' focuses on the techniques used by Raditladi to create images from apparently disconnected worlds. He has divided Raditladi's poems according to headings, focussing on the similarities and differences of imagery. He points out that displaying weaknesses and strengths of imagery is not an easy task and that it is important for one to establish how imagery is formed. Von Staden emphasises that the use of metaphoric language is one of the aspects to be taken into account when determining imagery in Raditladi's poetry. He raises a very important issue, but his study did not go far enough to interrogate the disconnected worlds.

Malamabane (2005) in her dissertation '*L.D. Raditladi – Mokwadi wa Setswana*' looks into a critical analysis of Raditladi's texts, content, plot as well as techniques Raditladi employs in his works. In this study, however, in the analysis of content and plot, definitions and interpretation is used as a point of departure. Raditladi's method of writing using theoretical perspectives of real author and the implied author is also examined. It will be noted that Raditladi uses a narrator when arranging his texts, particularly his prose fiction.

With regard to '*Motswasele II*', '*Sekgoma I*' and '*Legae Botshabelo*', the focus is on traditional chieftainship and politics. Raditladi also pays more attention to traditional healing and religion. These texts deal with more contemporary issues. His anthology of poetry *Sefalana sa Menate* is based on nature and historical events.

Malamabane's research scope is far too wide and does not produce the intended result of looking at Raditladi as a writer of different genres. It does not even touch on the actual strengths and weaknesses in all the genres he attempted. The title '*Raditladi, Mokwadi wa Setswana*' is misleading because it gives one an impression that she would sketch out the characteristics of the genres, such as

drama, novel and poetry; to critique all Raditladi's writings. These aspects in Raditladi's works are hardly exhausted in Malambane's study.

Mokobi's (1980) pays more attention to the plot and style. In analyzing the plot he touched on message, characters, events and milieu. He explicates that the message of the text was to highlight the significance and the essence of traditional medicine, but this message was exaggerated because the author wanted to stick to the heading/title of the text. The title has tied the author's hands to his back, and the titles control the direction of the text. In the process, the author failed to achieve his goal.

She states that the main character's powers have been exaggerated. The research also suggests that the character is more powerful than God after licking the traditional medicine. Other characters have been weakened to elevate the powers of the main character. The character does not face his problems and there is no one who challenges him. Mokomaditlhare has supernatural powers. He is able to stop a biting dog by pointing a finger at it. He controls elephants by giving them orders, makes rain and extinguishes fires.

Mokobi (1980) only covers general aspects of plot, language and style. By questioning Mokomaditlhare's powers, she shows his Eurocentric approach to African literature. It is a known fact that the Batswana doctor with the help of the *kgosi*; the chief performed rituals such as rainmaking. Schapera (1965), published an epoch-making publication '*The rain making rites of Batswana*'. A *moroka* in Setswana is a *ngaka* (doctor) that is able to make rain. In Bolobedu, Kgosi Modjadji is a well-renowned rain maker. She has inherited the skill from her mother, and the art of rain making has been practiced in the region for the past five generations.

Again, it is not surprising that people could give instructions to animals including elephants. If one has learned their ways and mastered the technique of communicating with animals it is easy to give them instructions. There are so many television shows of people living with snakes, lions, elephants and other dangerous animals.

On analysis of Dintshontsho *tsa Lorato*, Mokobi observes that Raditladi has two messages; that of racial segregation, where one group undermines and despises the other on the basis of race and the other message is that of a state of confusion. The researcher argues that the author was unable to achieve his objective because he just wanted to stick to the meaning of the title.

Seboko 1980 conducted a research on *A critical analysis of some poems of Raditladi*. The researcher focused on language and style like all those mentioned above. He has explained the messages of the poems as he understood them. According to the researcher, the theme of Raditladi's poetry revolves around nationalism, a chief's oppression of his subjects, acculturation, the adoption of a new culture, heroes and warriors and the praises of the *dikgosi*.

The researcher also touches on the different techniques used by Raditladi which enhances the meaning of his poetry. He gives examples of the use of figurative language such as personification, simile and metaphor.

Pilane's(1996) research, *Naming: An aspect of character portrayal in Dintshontsho tsa Lorato*, makes an analysis of name-giving in Raditladi's text. The researcher is looking at the techniques used when giving names – to reveal/expose their characteristics based on their activities. She points out that the message portrayed in the text is love, and this love was the main cause of the death of four characters. The researcher further explains the conflict caused by young love and the traditional culture of the Bangwato.

Pilane suggest that all the names of the characters in the play have meaning which portray the activities of the character in the play, and therefore, we can say their names represent the roles they play.

Sakoma ke mosimane wa koma (an initiated boy)

Mmamotia (tiya) strong girl

Modisa ene ke modisa wa dikgomo (herd-boy)

Ponalo o ntshetsa lefufa la gagwe mo pontsheng (revealing her jealousy in the open)

Dintshontsho tsa Lorato uses names of characters to portray the theme of the play and their roles.

The above example is an attempt to explain the meaning of the names of the characters and how they reveal their character in the play. Some names in Setswana, such as *thipa*, do not have any meaning as is the name of an object. There are many proper names without meaning. To say that Mmamotia is a strong girl seems to force meaning out of that name. All the other names, other than Modisa, are not convincing to say the least.

Mothoagae (1993) focussed on the study of syntactic foregrounding in poetry with examples from Raditladi, Magoleng and Motlhake. Mothoagae makes an analysis of Setswana sentence structure and its importance for poetic interpretation. Mothoagae used the study of stylistic foregrounding in poetry to highlight important aspects of poetic language. His focus was on poetic constructions and patterns, the intra-textual relations of words, phrases or sentences, verse lines and stanzas within a poem. Mothoagae's study is based on Ina Grabe's approach to poetry as elaborated in her works, namely, *Aspekte van poëtise taalgebruik: teoretiese verkenning en toepassing*, and *Syntax in poetry*.

This study is very significant as it breaks new ground in the analysis of Setswana poetry. The above-mentioned researchers mainly focussed on literary criticism paying more attention to form, device and technique. This study illustrates that Raditladi's work cannot be fully appreciated using one theory. It applies eclectic theories such as post-colonialism and Afrocentrism. With this critical caveat, the study demonstrates the breath of Raditladi's creative canvas.

CHAPTER 2

World of contrasts: traditional love and marriage versus modern troubadour love in *Selelo sa morati*—A lover's lament

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on an autobiographical poem from the collection, entitled *Selelo Sa Morati* (A Lover's Lament), which relates the tragic and unexpected death of the protagonist's young fiancée. The central theme of the poem revolves around the tension between traditional love and marriage and modern person to person love relationships. Captivated by the Troubadour ideal of person to person love, the poet and protagonist, is simultaneously conscious of the norms surrounding marriage in traditional Batswana culture.

The central question of the poem that is not explicitly stated but implied, becomes the thesis of this study: has the protagonist insulted the ancestors by adopting modern ways, ignoring custom and choosing his own marriage partner, or has his fiancée's family, known to be traditionalists, bewitched an educated young woman, causing her to be taken away in her prime?

2.2 Organisation of the chapter

This chapter is divided into the following two movements:

- The theoretical framework that supports the thesis that is derived from influences the researcher considers might have inspired and fed Raditladi's creative imagination. These include modern person to person love versus traditional norms of love and marriage in the real life of the

Batswana and in Setswana fiction. In examining modern person to person love, this chapter looks specifically at the case of Seretse Kgama, heir to the Bamangwato chieftainship, and paternal cousin of Raditladi. In examining the second, the researcher considers J. M. Ntsime's drama "*Pelo e ja serati*" (*A loving heart knows no bounds*). To complete the theoretical framework, the researcher contrasts Batswana customary marriage and the Troubadour ideal of love.

- An analysis of "*Selelo sa Morati*" (*A Lover's Lament*), highlighting the larger dilemma the poet and protagonist faces in common with his contemporaries as well as his African counterparts who continue to inhabit and negotiate this world of contrasts.

2.3 Raditladi and social change

Notwithstanding the obviously autobiographical nature of the poem, arguably written with cathartic intent, it seems as if Raditladi's intention in "*Selelo sa Morati*" was to create a poem that would appeal to both critical and popular tastes, as his composition was done during the early years of written poetry in Setswana.

Social change was at the heart of the African creative writers of Raditladi's era, and Raditladi's desire seems to be, as suggested by the balance of imagery in the poem, a respectful marriage of traditional and modern norms of love and marriage.

The sixties in the West was an era of so called free love, when children decided to move away from the firm grip of parental supervision. These years were also important in terms of the civil rights activism that resulted in ending legalized racism. But beyond the West, a musical gospel of love crossed racial boundaries,

appealing to the popular imagination and black South African school children who, impatient with the timidity of their parents, ushered in a new era that caught the world's attention and led to the eventual abolition of apartheid. The courage and bravery of those who died for the ideals of freedom, such as Martin Luther King, Bob Marley and those who participated in the Soweto Uprising, changed the course of history. Their love and zeal, in each instance, was greater than even the fear of death; they were willing to die for their ideals. The parents of the sixties and seventies were forced to respect that courage and freedom of choice. The demand for freedom of choice from the parents in Raditladi's poem is the subject of this study, but first, the various influences on the poem will be discussed.

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Traditional Love and Marriage versus Modern Troubadour Love Relationships in Life and in Literature

2.4.1 Case of Seretse Kgama

A man asserting the freedom to choose and marrying outside the Batswana nation are central to the life of Seretse Kgama, as recounted in Dutfield (1990). The real life drama that involved the marriage of Seretse Kgama, heir to the Bamangwato chieftaincy, to a white English woman and commoner, took the world by storm in 1948. Raditladi and Seretse, great grandsons of Sekgoma I, had grown up in the same chief's household. Seretse's father died when he was very young and his uncle, Tshekedi, stepped in as regent. While studying in England, Seretse met and fell in love with Ruth. Seretse embodied the Troubadour bravery of the individual who trusts his heart in the face of seemingly insurmountable social and political sanctions. Seretse and Ruth's love weathered many storms. The marriage endured and they raised a family. The eldest son, Ian Kgama, installed as paramount chief in 1979, was sworn in as fourth President of Botswana on 1st April 2008.

From the beginning, the couple had to vanquish the disapproval of Ruth's parents and Seretse's uncle, Tshekedi, the suspicions of the Bamangwato tribe, and the ruthless obstructionism of the British government. In Bamangwato custom, to marry without your father's (or, as here, regent's) permission, was a serious offence. Further, for the chief to marry without the tribe's consent struck at the foundations of government national politics since his marriage was a principal instrument in forging alliances, breaking up power blocs and helping to ensure the future unity of the tribe. Seretse wrote the following to his uncle:

I realize that this matter will not please you because the tribe will not like it as the person I am marrying is a white woman. I do not know what the people will say when they hear of this. [...] I realize that it was my *duty* to have asked your consent before I had done this thing but I know you would refuse and it would be difficult for me to disregard your advice ... Please forgive me. (Dutfield 1990, p.9)

Freedom of choice was obviously more important than duty to Seretse, who seems to have believed that the time had passed when the parents or the tribe should choose the chief's wife. But tradition is tenacious in every society, especially among royalty.

In the hotbed of tribal politics, the marriage of the chief was a principal instrument in forging alliances, breaking up power blocs and helping to ensure the future unity of the tribe. Seretse's choice to marry outside the tribe and nation became a focus of major political entanglement between Britain and South Africa. Striking at the heart of white on black racism, it exploded into a local, national and international crisis. According to Ruth's father "mixed marriage was a disaster for all those involved and a tragedy for any children" (Dutfield 1990, p. 8). Such was the ignorance of racial facts among Whites, the *Sunday Times* in England

published an article before the birth of Ruth and Seretse's first child that was intended to allay fears: "Many ill-informed people are inclined to regard this much-discussed marriage as a union between two different animal species. It most certainly is not." (cited in Dutfield 1990, p. 200). Seretse's life illustrates the extent to which socially-sanctioned racism, based on the ignorance and stigma attached to mixed marriages, interferes with the freedom and happiness of individuals.

Seretse's choice, just like the allusions in Raditladi's poem, had far-reaching ramifications he could never have dreamed of. Choosing a modern person to person love relationship and marrying outside the Batswana nation propelled him out of the traditional and tribal into modern and national politics. By renouncing his birthright, the chieftainship, he was allowed to return home in 1956 from his exile in England. Raditladi also had to pay dearly by losing his beloved as a result of his actions. Ten years later, Seretse won a landslide majority as leader of a modern political party, becoming the first President of an independent Botswana in 1966. His experience begs the question: to what extent does the choice of modern ideals involve embracing more modern ideals? And hence the understandable concern of the traditionalists, ultimately responsible for the survival of the nation-tribe. Most modern ideals imply a measure of individualism, frequently antagonistic to the time-honoured African norm of "*botho*," which postulates a group existence, this subtly implied in Raditladi's work.

2.4.2 Ntsime's *Pelo E Serati* (A Loving Heart Knows No Bounds)

There is an analogous relationship between Ntsime's 1975 drama "*Pelo e ja serati*" (*A Loving Heart knows no bounds*), one of the best known Setswana dramas ever, and the life and times of Seretse Kgama. It may be inferred that Ntsime could not reveal the events as they happened because of the sensitivity of the issue at the time. The South African government, with its policy of

apartheid, had openly opposed the marriage in 1948, banning Seretse and Ruth in South Africa. Ntsime thus used fictitious names to be able to publish his play. There are striking similarities, for example, the protagonist Dithole was heir to the chieftainship, and hence a designated guardian of culture, history and tradition; like Seretse, Dithole felt that the time had come to allow a man to choose his own love relationship. Further, Ntsime's drama, strikes at the heart of racism, exposing the daunting obstacles to marrying outside the Batswana nation.

Traditionally, mixed marriages, even across black South African nations, were unacceptable to the Batswana. Such segregation and racism operates as Ntsime's primary theme. Dithole, heir to the Bakhudung chieftaincy, chooses in the modern way:

Molekane ke tla go bolelela ka tolamo

Ke rata ngwana wa Letebele

Mme pelo ya me e rotha madi.

Go leokoriba magareng a me le mosetsana,

Leo le agilweng ke mekgwa le ditso

Leo melao ya lona e gagametseng

Melao e e sireletsang katamelano ya merafe

Melao e e nyatsang merafe e mengwe (Ntsime 1975: 3-4)

I am going to give it to you straight my friend

I am in love with the Ndebele girl

But my heart is bleeding

There is a an abyss between me and the girl

That is created by customs and traditions

Its laws are stringent

Laws that prevent nations from becoming close

Laws that disparage other nations.

Society's collective will, the abyss created by deeply entrenched laws, customs, and taboos that buttress racism, is indeed a daunting force. The role of Nombini in Ntsime's drama seems to be to make the Bakhudung people realize that their traditional stance belongs to the past and to convince them to allow a Motswana to marry a foreigner. Later in the play, Ntsime's allusion to a black blanket, an image borrowed from *Macbeth*, evokes the mental anguish and torment Dithole suffers. Torn between what he thinks are the outdated laws of his parents and what his heart tells him, while looking at the sunset he says to his friend:

Lo wela ka lookoriba la bophirima ka bohutsana

Lefifi la bohutsana le tlhaga le suma ka mabetwaepelo,

Le apesa lefatshe la bohutsana kobo e ntsho,

Le hupetsa maikutlo a me, le ntshofatsa pelo ya me

Ke tla dirang molekane? (Ntsime, 1975: 5)

It goes down the Western precipice in a sad state

Sad darkness comes hissing angrily

It covers the whole sad earth with a black blanket

It stifles my feelings, it saddens my heart,

What shall I do my friend?

What really stifles Dithole's feelings and saddens him is the conflict of loyalties; a sense of duty to his parents and traditional norms on the one hand, and the modern love person to person relationship he desires, on the other. The same mental anguish of one caught between the forces of tradition and modernity, comes to the fore in Raditladi's "*Selelo sa Morati*" (*A Lover's Lament*).

2.4.3 Batswana customary marriage

Three aspects of Batswana customary marriage are relevant to our discussion:

- Marriages are typically arranged and endogamous
- Marriage is a social contract between two families
- Gender roles are clearly defined within marriage.

Traditionally, endogamous (internal) marriage was practised among the Batswana (Schapera 1953; Comaroff 1985). When a boy married his cousin, it was said "*Motswala ngwana wa malome, dikgomo di boela sakeng*" (My cousin is my uncle's son, cattle will return to the same kraal), meaning the family's cattle would not be lost to strangers. In traditional societies, the family looked for a suitable cousin to marry the young man, as in Ntsime's drama, where the parents select Dithole's cousin, Mosidi. An important factor with regard to internal marriage was that parents chose for their sons. Witchcraft was prevalent during those days, but it was fairly certain that no parent would choose a woman known to be an expert in using traditional charms.

To all intents and purposes a young man did not marry for person to person love, though traditional marriage certainly involved family love and was conducive to the inclusive love, "*botho*." A young man married to extend family ties and keep the family name alive (Matjila 2008). As such, marriage among the Batswana was not an individual affair but a relationship between two groups of people (ibid). When an initiated boy became a man his parents informed relevant family

members such as *malome* (the maternal uncle) and *rakgadi* (the paternal aunt) that the young man was ready to marry (ibid). The family shouldered the responsibility for *bogadi* (cattle given as a bridal gift). Originally *bogadi* consisted of two cattle, one to be slaughtered to feed the wedding guests and one to go to the mother's home to provide milk for the mother and the firstborn baby, who would be born at the maternal home (Haire & Matjila 2008, p. 11). Once the relatives of the groom transferred certain marriage goods to the relatives of the bride, the bride was publicly transferred by her relatives to the in-laws (Matjila 1996, p. 38).

The giving of cattle which were the very centre of Batswana life and hence sacred, was a measure of the usefulness and value of a wife in the home, in terms of the children she bore; her care for the extended family, including the elderly and orphans; and her labour. This was the role prescribed for women within marriage. Traditionally, roles for men and women were well-defined. The definition of the roles did not by any means meant that other roles were inferior to others. This was a balancing act for proper work management within the homestead. The husband was regarded as the patriarch and superior, the wife as inferior, a "gift" that the husband must be grateful for (Matjila 1996, p. 39).

Women's work included tending the fields and raising crops, building, painting and decorating their homes, refurbishing and maintaining all building constructions in their household. In addition, women fetched wood from the forest, ground wheat, maize and sorghum, drew water from pools and rivers and cooked. In short, she was the life line of her family.

2.4.4 Modern troubadour person to person to love

In contrast to customary marriage is the modern ideal of love, which arose with the Troubadours in the 12th century in the West. The Troubadours were the first to transgress convention, considering love as a person to person relationship, rather than a social arrangement and contract between two families, and sanctioned by the church (Campbell 1988, episode 5). In medieval Europe, the so called "dark ages," woman was a chattel, owned by her father who could give her away in order to build alliances and unify tribes, as in the prototypical Western love story of Tristan and Isolde, the first literary expression of modern person to person love. Tristan and Isolde's love was forbidden because it thwarted strategic social and political arrangements.

The Troubadours characterized this ideal as love born of the eyes and the heart, or more specifically "what the eyes have made welcome to the heart" (Campbell 1988, episode 5). This love occurs when one is seized with the recognition of the soul's counterpart in another person (ibid). It represents the triumph of libido, the impulse to life from the heart, the "opening up of the heart" to another person (ibid). There is an intense focus on the feelings. In person to person love, the ideal to strive for is love itself. Person to person love involves intensely felt and powerful emotions. Raditladi and Ntsime were the first Setswana writers to articulate the power of this modern ideal in the life of Africans. Ntsime illuminates the growing feeling of this type of love through Dithole, in the following words:

Molekane lerato le ntoile pelo
Ke fenyegile mo maikutlong
Gore le fa lerato le ka ntlisetsa kotsi
Ke tla e leba ka leitlho le lehibidu
Ke e leba jaaka tautona
Fa e leba phologotswana bosigo (Ntsime 1975, p.2)

My friend, love has bewitched my heart
 It has conquered my feelings
 Even if it leads me into danger
 I will face it with my red eye [bravery]
 Face it like a mighty lion
 Staring down a small animal at night

Troubadour love was viewed by the church in the Middle Ages as heresy and adultery (Campbell 1988, episode 5). It transgressed convention and was therefore forbidden. The church condemned those who practised this modern ideal of person to person love to eternal damnation. It upset the social order and challenged the power of the church.

Faced with the almost monolithic power of the church in the Middle Ages, the triumph of modern love became the courage of the individual to trust his own experience of life and go against the institution with the curse it would invoke, as is the case in Raditladi's poem (ibid). Raditladi in his poetry goes against the norm knowing that there might be consequences. In the same sense, this Troubadour ideal, based on individual choice, required tremendous bravery. As articulated in the lines from *Ntsime*, it required the courage of a lion for the African, socialized to customary marriage, to disregard the parental and tribal authority representing a sacrosanct custom handed down from the ancestors.

The issues that have emerged from the theoretical section, inform our analysis, namely, a man making his own choice in love and marriage; socially-sanctioned racism facing those who choose outside the tribe; Batswana cultural norms, and arranged endogamous marriages and the well-defined role for women within the extended patriarchal family in particular; as well as person to person love relationships, based on "what the eyes have made welcome to the heart," a

modern ideal to which the educated Africans such as Raditladi had been exposed and hence such reflections in his poetry.

2.5 Analysis

This paragraph intends looking at the person to person love through “*Selelo sa Morati*” (*A Lover’s Lament*) which scales the pinnacle of ecstatic joy and the pleasure of young love in verses one and two, descending slowly to the emotional depths of perplexing pain and grief in verses three, four, and half of five, closing with emotional equilibrium in half of verse five and six. The analysis is divided into three sections, according to this emotional flow. Selected images that convey the contrast of traditional love and marriage versus modern Troubadour love are analyzed.

2.5.1 Emotional heights

1. *Letsatsi le ne le ya kwa bodikela*
2. *Le ratela kgala e e botalabogolo*
3. *Kopano ya lefatshe le legodimo*
4. *Kwa loagong lole lwa bašwi le badimo*
5. *Re ne re le morago ga ntlo ya dithuto*
6. *Re umakalana tsa semophato*
7. *Ka re Mokgatla, ke a go tsaya ke ya rapela*
8. *Ke tla ruta Bangwato go gankafala*

(Raditladi 1964:13)

It was the time of twilight
 The sun making its departure
 At the end of the horizon
 Resting place of our ancestors
 We were relaxing on the school premises
 Reminiscing about our school work
 When I declared my love to her
 Pioneer of boldness among Bangwato

Poetry, says Wordsworth “is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings; it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity” (as cited in Scheub 2002, p. 108). Raditladi the poet, in solitude, remembers with a flood of emotions, his university days when he declared love and proposed marriage to his lover. He recalls everything so vividly, the time of day, the season, the exact place. For two people who were attracted to each other, the natural setting was conducive to sharing feelings of love. “Twilight” is a very special time. After the setting of the sun, when the earth’s atmosphere is illumined by the sun’s direct rays and their reflection on the earth, the sun becomes reddish-orange and the trees, grass, flowers ... everything is illuminated as it is bathed in this special, warm light (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Raditladi gives twilight an extended symbolic meaning by mentioning that it occurs at the end of the horizon, literally, the place where earth meets sky. The end of the horizon, according to the poet, is where the ancestors are laid: “*Kwa loagong lole la baswi le badimo*”(Resting place of our ancestors). Thus, figuratively, it is a place where people can invoke their sanctity. It can be inferred that the poet, about to declare love, is praying to the ancestors to bless his words. If the relationship is going to be a good foundation for establishing a family – the poet specifically desires marriage (l.7 “*go tsaya*” means literally “to marry”) and a lifelong partnership – then, culturally-speaking, an ancestral

authorization is requisite. Thus he implicitly aligns himself with the fundamental African belief in the presence, power and intervention of the ancestors in the affairs of the living.

While supplicating the ancestors to consecrate this union, the poet has simultaneously chosen the modern ideal of love, the practice of declaring love directly to the woman. The poet, it seems, desires to marry aspects of tradition to modernity. During that era, it was not common for a Motswana man to propose to a woman. Arranged marriages were the norm. Hence the poet says "*Ke tla ruta Bangwato go gankafala*" (pioneer of boldness among Bangwato) referring to the fact that he has not sought parental permission in keeping with the cultural expectations and requirements. Like the Troubadours, he has thwarted a time-honoured social custom in obedience to his heart. He has gone outside the nation to marry. The setting, on the school or university grounds, is an appropriate setting for this scene of young love, since it is exposure to education that has prompted the poet to follow modern ways. As in the case of his cousin, Seretse, the repercussions of thwarting "duty" for one from a chiefly family, can be tremendously far-reaching.

9. *Mme ya ne e kete ke mo gasa mosetlho*

10. *Ka bona mosadi a kalakatsha leitlho*

11. *A etsa fela serurubele leseding*

12. *Serurubele se falola lefifing*

(Raditladi 1964:13).

She looked at me as if perplexed
I saw her avert her wild-wild eyes
Like a butterfly in the misty light
Butterflies only survive in the dark

Surprised by the audacity and the forthrightness of her lover, and overwhelmed by her feelings, she averts her glance. *Go kalakatsha matlho* (Avert one's eyes) is when a person is unable to look another in the eyes, when a person does not want to reveal what the heart says. The eyes will dart up and down and sideways. The modern practice of direct love proposals is new to her too and she has been caught unawares. "Like a butterfly" is suggestive also of a fluttering heart. Love is an emotion felt in the heart. That she is head-over-heels in love is obvious – like a butterfly in the brightness of the sunlight, she cannot conceal her feelings. Both by its colours and its movement, a butterfly is very conspicuous. It can only hide in the dark. Modern Troubadour love, born of the eyes and the heart, is captured by the poet's recognition of his soul's counterpart, by the reciprocity of feeling betrayed by his lover's eyes.

Stanza 2

1. *Rurubele di ne di fofa kwa godimo*
 2. *Tse di mebala ya metshe ya badimo*
 3. *O ka re ke basadi ba duduetsa*
 4. *Di fapaakana fela e kete di a ba etsa*
 5. *Ka fa tlase ga meriti ya ditlhare*
 6. *Phate ya lenaga e šupa botswerere*
 7. *Dithunya tse di mebala magabagakwe*
 8. *Tse di madilotsana mebala ya nkwe*
 9. *Le motshe wa badimo di a bo di o gaisa*
 10. *Bontle jwa tsone le pelo bo e kgorisa*
 11. *Ka ba ka bona ke tsitsiboga mmele*
 12. *Le mogopolo wa me ga o bo le bale.*
1. (Raditladi 1964:13)..

Butterflies were soaring in the sky
 Radiating the colours of the rainbow
 Fluttering and dancing like ululating women
 Criss-crossing in sprightly dance
 Beneath the shadows of the trees
 The blossoming green grass of the veld
 A heavenly paradise of sundry flowers
 Piebald spots of the Leopard
 Prettier than the rainbow colours
 A thing of beauty is rhapsody of joy
 Arousing rapture and reverence in me
 The kind of beauty you never forget

After comparing his lover's reaction with "butterflies in the misty light", the poet extends the metaphor, declaring that indeed butterflies were soaring in the sky. As emotions continue to fill the air and flit between the two lovers with "hearts-a-flutter" Raditladi makes the words of the poem dance, fly and sing. He creates harmony at the same frequency by likening the many colours of the butterflies to rainbow colours. Like the special light at twilight, a rainbow is a natural wonder, contributing to the surroundings that were conducive to the promise the would-be lovers were about to make. The rainbow not only represents beautiful colours but contrast also. It can represent unity in diversity. In this context, rainbow colours may be alluding to the fact that the poet and his fiancée-to-be came from different communities. The poet was a Mongwato while his lover was a Mokgatla. The poet has chosen a wife outside his community. In South Africa, the term "rainbow nation," in its common currency today, acknowledges the fact that people are different but can still unite and be one.

Compounding the problem of choosing a person to person love relationship and asserting his freedom from parental authority, the poet opts for a love partner chosen from outside his tribe. The obstacle of socially-sanctioned racism expounded earlier, was a very real problem for Seretse Kgama and Ntsime's fictional Dithole. For one from a chiefly family, the social and political pressures can be immense. Naledi (Seretse's sister) is more apt when explicating this issue in her interview:

"Tshekedi's displeasure raised many eyebrows, as his contention was that Seretse was not fit and proper to be kgosi as he has contravened recognized laws and violated customs. The tussle that was characterized by many series of meetings and activities resulted in the banishment of Seretse from Serowe." (*Kutlwano Magazine*. Volume 46, p. 31).

Raditladi, as more fully elaborated later in the poem, sees only the advantages of having this foreigner in the family. From the imagery of the rainbow, it might be inferred that he views "difference" as "complementing and enhancing", like the contrasting colours of the rainbow that blend harmoniously and represent the full spectrum of light, hence completeness. It is clear from his utterances that the poet here encourages his people to endeavour breaking down the racial barriers of marriage.

Butterflies, which together with flowers of piebald colours, trees and grass form the backdrop for a love proposal in the modern way, also evoke traditional marriage sentiments. Line 15 "Fluttering and dancing like ululating women" recalls Wordsworth's "Daffodils" "fluttering and dancing in the breeze." Through his words the poet breathes life into nature, reflecting African consciousness, in which animals, nature and man, believed to be interconnected, are animated by a life force or indwelling spirit.

Extending the metaphor, Raditladi's butterflies are "criss-crossing in sprightly dance." Lines 15 and 16 envision marriage celebrations. In a traditional Setswana marriage ceremony, women of all age-sets prepare for the wedding by choosing a traditional garment. Each age-set will have a garment unlike all the others. On the wedding day, donned in their traditional garb, the women sing songs and praises. Some will ululate while others sing praise compositions. The imagery of butterflies as ululating women thus conjures up a joyous wedding celebration, colourful, joyful and animated, in comparison to a relatively more sedate ceremony in a church or registry office. While choosing his own modern love relationship, the poet retains the desire for a traditional wedding.

From the description of the surroundings with "blossoming green grass", the rainbow and "sundry flowers", one gets the feeling that it is spring time; the flowers, prettier than anything imaginable, outshine the colours of the rainbow. It is the kind of beauty that delights the heart, making it overflow with pleasure. Just as nature and the powerful emotion of love made the poet feel truly alive, in turn the poet breathes life into nature through his words. Nature becomes a participant, reflecting the African belief in an indwelling spirit animating man, animals and nature. The poet's words breathe life, capturing the intense feelings of the heart opening itself up to another person who characterizes Troubadour love. Raditladi feels truly alive. Heightened emotions characterise the first two verses which crescendo with "A thing of beauty is rhapsody of joy/arousing rapture and reverence in me". The words "rhapsody, rapture and reverence" sum up the feelings evoked in nature and capture the music of the poetic composition.

2.5.2 Emotional depths

Not only does verse three break dramatically with the emotional tone established in verses one and two, but the poem moves from the modern setting of the university grounds to the rural home of the extended family of the bridegroom. Thus, not only Raditladi, but Africans today also frequently negotiate a world of contrasts. While images of nature predominate in the first two verses, verses three to five provide a contrast, with imagery of Batswana cultural and historical significance predominating.

Stanza 3

1. *E rile ke fitlha kwa Serowe kwa gae*
2. *Ka re photi tsa Bangwato mono di kae*
3. *Ntla di thelwa ke Bakgatla lošalaba*
4. *Di phalwa ke phologolo di loriba*
5. *Foo ka bona ke šošobana moriri*
6. *Ka thaakanya ditsebe jaaka phiri*
7. *Ka ba ka utlwa ba re mosadi wa me o ile*
(Raditladi 1964:13).

As I arrived in Serowe the land of my forefathers
I boldly greeted venerators of the duiker
Wondering about the uproar made by Bakgatla
Wondering why they were eclipsed by other animals
And there I got the fright of my life
I listened attentively like a wolf
I was told that my wife had passed on

Arriving in Serowe, excited about the wedding plans, the poet inquires after the health of his family. His greeting in line 26 evokes the totem animal of the *Bangwato*. Encountering the family's sad countenance at a time which is normally a time of celebration, the poet is bewildered. When he heard that his fiancée had died, he descended to the depths of grief.

8. *O phamotswe ke nonyane e iphitlhile*
 9. *Ke lengongobadi la lenong ka lela*
 10. *La mo isa legodimong a sa bobola*
 11. *Kwa ga rara ra gakgamalela lenong*
 12. *Menwana ya rona rotlhe ra e tsenya nkong*
- (Raditladi 1964:13).

**She was snatched by an invisible bird
A vulture stole her in silence – I cried
It took her to heaven without falling ill
The vulture perplexed all and sundry
We were all crippled by sadness**

People in many parts of the world have long associated vultures with death, burial rites, and the cleansing of a body to release its spirit. According to African custom in times past, when a rapacious, predatory person who lives off the misfortune of others dies, it is believed that their spirit must spend a time as a vulture in order to learn how they had lived and how they were viewed by others. At the close of the cleansing, the powerful men together with the medicine man approached a flock of vultures and killed the one bird which did not take flight, freeing the spirit to the spirit world. Powerful medicine was then made of the vulture's body, believed to contain some powers that would give back to those people who had been selfishly preyed upon (as related in Gjosund, 2006:24–25). Vultures who feed on carrion seldom attack healthy animals, while they may kill

the wounded or sick, hence the poet's surprise in line 33 since his fiancée was not sick.

Metaphorically a vulture represents anything that eats away at us as would be experienced in the writings of Shakespeare. "I am Revenge: sent from the infernal kingdom/To ease the gnawing vulture of thy mind/By working wreckful vengeance on thy foes." (Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*). The vulture can be a person, an accident or a witch. The traditional Batswana believed in *boloi* (witchcraft) (Matjila 2008). Thus, the vulture imagery in the poem raises the possibility that the young woman's family may have bewitched her. *Boloi* (witchcraft) may be motivated by greed, envy or vengeance (ibid). The purpose of a witch is always to injure or kill (ibid). In the case of the poet, some person in the community might have heard that the young woman was getting married and out of jealousy used charms to bewitch her. Though she may have died of natural causes, the poet indicates how inexplicable her death was. Suspecting that the Bakgatla used witchcraft against their love, adds to the painful loss of his fiancée.

While the vulture has positive associations – for example, to the Egyptians its wide wings offer protection, and in southern Africa, it is associated with protection and godliness because its high soaring is believed to take it close to heaven – the poet's use here appears to draw on its negative connotations. This seems to be confirmed by the sound imagery in lines 34–35: the repetition of the fricative /r/ six times in lines 34–35 and the ejective velar fricative /kg/ in line 34, convey feelings of pain, torment and suffering. The hard sound reinforces the implied emotions. Raditladi's poetry abounds in imagery as it could further be seen in the following lines:

Stanza 4 Verse

1. *Bakgatla ba a re ba a fa ba konkometse*
2. *Ba mphile meraba ba ntsenya bolwetse*
3. *Ya re ke amogela ka itshwara dinala*
4. *Mosadi wa me ba se na go mo nneela*
5. *Ke ne ke tlhophile fela bohunwana*
6. *Bakgatla, ke ne ke tlhophile lošagarana*
7. *Ke tlhophile morotologa wa naga*
8. *Lenong la tloga la dubaka meraga*

(Raditladi 1964:14)

Bakgatla tantalize by offering and withholding
 They gave me charms that caused heartbreak
 And withheld the offer before receiving it
 My wife after she was given to me
 She was of reddish-brown colour
 And indeed the finest bead of them all
 I picked the prettiest plum in the veld
 But the vulture muddied the waters

The allusion in line 37 to *meraba* (medicines) may have positive connotations of medicine leading to good health (Matjila 1996, p. 189). Thus it may mean that the husband-to-be thinks of this prospective wife as a good medicine, a woman who takes care of the family, comforting her husband during trying times and providing the children with love and affection (ibid). The bride's family tantalized the bridegroom by first giving birth to and raising this wonderful woman who attracted him and accepted his proposal, then making him return empty-handed when he was about to get the medicines (ibid). Conversely, *meraba* (charms) might be an object or power that one uses to cause evil events. The poet feels

that he has been deliberately lured to fall in love while the main aim was to hurt him. It is suggested that he is grieving to the point of being mentally unstable, and there is nothing that could comfort him. Thus, he feels like a person who has been bewitched. Whichever way it is understood, as a good medicine or an evil charm, the poet has lost the most valuable part of his life.

While conscious of the Setswana tradition and custom by which it is unlawful for a Motswana to select his wife, the poet declares three times (lines. 40–2) “*ke tlhopile*,” literally meaning, “I chose.” The poet exercised his freedom to choose a marriage partner, disregarding the custom of arranged marriage. But what did he choose? Line 40 (“She was of reddish-brown colour”) is an image drawn from Batswana culture. “*Bohunwana*” refers specifically to the colour of a cow, but figuratively conveys her value as defined by the traditional role of a wife. Since, traditionally, cattle are the most prized possession among the Batswana, metaphorically likening his lover to a cow, indicates her high value. Cattle have been the very lifeline of the Batswana, having countless everyday uses:

Cows provide milk to feed the community. They provide hide to make clothes, shoes, hats, carpets, milk vessels, whips and ropes to bind cattle during ploughing periods. Their horns are used to make trumpets which are used during wars. They are a means of transport. Equally important, their skins are used to wrap corpses (Matjila 1996, p. 154).

Moreover, cattle are slaughtered to feed guests at festivals and celebrations. (Haire & Matjila 2008). In times of hunger and famine, a cow is taken to the forest as a sacrifice to appease the ancestors (ibid). The Setswana language is rich in proverbs derived from the usefulness and sacred status accorded to cattle. Chiefs and prominent figures are favourably compared to oxen in traditional Setswana poetry (Matjila 1996, p. 149). Thus the metaphor is used here with positive effect, signifying the wife’s central and critical role in the new family.

Paradoxically, despite the protagonist and poet's "pioneer of boldness" in championing a person to person love relationship, it may be inferred that he still wishes for a woman to play her role within the new family in the traditional sense by his choice of a deeply cultural image. This is confirmed by the preceding line (39) which indicates the traditional patriarchal view that a wife is a "gift" to the husband.

The central tension of the poem is rendered in heightened poetic language:

9. La tshwanolola dintshwangntshwang di tshwanne

10. La ba la rarolola merero e raraane

11. Bogadi jwa me jwa wela ka lebitla

12. Tse dikhunwana tsa fapoga Bakgatla

(Raditladi 1964:14)

It altered the likenesses which were alike

Unravelling resolution after being concluded

My bridal gift was lost to the grave

Reddish brown cows evaded the Bakgatla

The poet is grieving. On the one hand, he is haunted by the sense that he has unwittingly brought down upon himself the wrath of the ancestors by adopting the modern ways of love, on the other, he is taunted by a sense that the traditionalist in-laws have willed the harm. Alliteration of the labialised alveolar sound /tshw/ in line 44, shows the contrasting feelings. The poet addresses a sudden change of circumstances in his life experience. Death altered the things they had in common i.e. their shared feelings of love, implies that death robbed the poet of his beloved fiancée. All the preparations were made, it was the moment for celebration. The use of the sound image /tshw/ expresses the contrast from jubilation to sorrow. Everything changed in the blinking of an eye. There is a

reversal from the emotional tone of ecstatic joy in the first two verses to verses three, four and half of five, marked by grief, pain and mental anguish. The sound image emphasizes the striking change of mood. Moreover, the contrast here is about life and death as well as happiness and sorrow. The sound image /tshw/ has been used four times to create drama, action and reversal.

Line 45 “*La rarolola merero e raraane*,” by repeating the sound image /r/ six times, creates the feeling of torment and suffering, as showed earlier in lines 34–35. Typically, the fricative /r/ sound is used to express the physical pain caused by cannons, fire, spears and bullets but its use is figurative here, portraying the poet’s emotional turmoil. The alveolar sound image /r/ denotes distress and discomfort. Death has shattered the young poet’s world both emotionally and psychologically; he is in sixes and sevens. Moreover, the two families will not be united now that negotiations have been interrupted. Literally, the cattle as bridal gift will never be delivered (line 47). Though he had embraced a modern person to person love relationship, the protagonist had respectfully followed the custom of *bogadi* (giving of cattle). Clearly, the poet is attempting to marry the modern and traditional modes of love and marriage. Thus the poem continues:

Stanza 4 Verse

1. *Boo Mabusolosa a Kgabo diruthuthwe*
 2. *Ba ratile thata morogo wa rothwe*
 3. *Thutego ya mosadi ya ba foroka*
 4. *E kabo nene fano ba re boloka*
 5. *Ba re tšhwaa ka mosadi wa thutokgolo*
 6. *Ra ko ra tlhoka go bidiwa masilo*
- (Raditladi 1964:14).

Venerators of the monkey are cowards
 All they relish is herbaceous plant
 A woman's education misled them
 They were expected to spare us
 By giving us an enlightened woman
 For people to stop calling us foolish

The poet chose to marry a young woman he met at university, hence she was educated. In traditional societies, women were not allowed to go to school. In line 51 we learn that the poet's expectations from this union were very high. "*Go boloka*" is to prevent damage, to create sustenance or to be helpful. The kind of help the poet was looking for was to be given by a progressive woman, as articulated in line 52. The poet uses the plural /re/ (we) in lines 51–53, implying that the wife does not belong to an individual but to the family. As noted earlier, the role of a married Batswana includes the care of the in-laws as well as the elderly and orphans in the family. Together, the poet's use of cattle imagery to describe his fiancée, his respect in following "*bogadi*" custom, and his use of the plural /re/ (we), indicates that although he is the pioneer of a modern person to person love relationship, he desires a traditional wife in terms of her role in the extended family. Moreover, the allusion to the ancestors at the beginning of the poem implies a traditional strong family including ancestors and children. Into the traditional mix, however, he throws a modern educated woman. With the presence of an educated woman, he believes, ignorance and racism will be erased.

The resistance of his fiancée's people, "venerators of the monkey" to modern ways is indeed a force to be reckoned with. In line 49, the phrase "*Morogo wa rothwe*" (herbaceous plant), literally, a delicacy at a certain period in time, figuratively refers to an age in the past. It suggests the traditionalists' unwillingness to change. Line 50 "A woman's education misled them" may imply that because she is educated, she does not adhere to the norm of arranged

marriage, hence she is being punished for her disobedience in this regard. If his fiancée was taken by the ancestors, it may mean that the ancestors disapproved of this marriage outside the tribe; hence they decided to take their daughter before committing such a despicable act. On the other hand, an educated woman could illicit envy, hence the possibility of witchcraft. Ignorance breeds fear, and it might have been a matter of the traditionalists fear of the unknown; an educated woman was something very new in those days. Ignorance also played a part in the Seretse affair, specifically by whites who, being ignorant of racial facts, resisted and feared intermarriage. As noted earlier, the learned professor of Edinburgh University whose statement appeared before the birth of Seretse and Ruth's first child had to spell out the fact that having black or white skin does not mean that people belong to different species, as in animals, where cross-breeding can be impossible (Dutfield, 1990:200).

2.5.3 Equilibrium

After the emotional heights and depths, the poet has regained his equilibrium, and he composes a eulogy to his lover. The poet's dilemma remains unresolved though, but the sentiment is one of philosophical acceptance. Looking at a photograph of his fiancée, he compares her beauty with things found in nature, such as plants, birds and precious stones.

7. *Ke bua jaana ka Mokgatla ke mo lebile*

8. *Moriti wa gagwe pampiring a o mphile*

9. *Ke yo mosadi e kete o ka bua "dumela"*

10. *Pounama tsa gagwe tsa bulega a phela*

11. *Matlho a gwe o kare teemane di le pedi*

12. *Fa gare ga sekaka sa Kgalagadi*

(Raditladi 1964:14).

I am talking about the Mokgatla, glancing at her
 On the photograph she gave to me
 She looks as if she can say "hello"
 As if she can open her lips and live
 Her eyes are like two pieces of diamond
 In the middle of Kalahari desert

Stanza 6 Verse

1. *Moriri ekete gala la morukuru*
 2. *O o boleta jwa diphofa tsa tseberu*
 3. *Sebaka sa gagwe phatsimane thamong*
 4. *O ka re mola wa godimo legodimong*
 5. *Sehuba e kete thotana tsa moilego*
 6. *Mosese o ka re loapi go le bosigo*
 7. *O tlogetse lefatshe le o le monana*
 8. *O le boša jwa bojang jo botala*
 9. *Dimatla di leba ke baswi mo mošong*
 10. *Jaaka wena rotlhe re tla tsena lošong*
 11. *Phupung keledi tsa mošong di tla elela*
 12. *Le merara le rona e tla ne ramalala*
- (Raditladi 1964:14).

Her hair as pitch as ashes of tambuti wood
 And as soft as feathers of a baby dove
 Her string of beads illuminates her beauty
 Like rainbow colours in the sky

Her breasts like two small hills
 Her dress is like firmament at night
 You left this world at a tender age
 Young and fresh like the green grass of the veld
 Death is a mystery, difficult to fathom
 Like you we shall all die
 People will always shed tears at the graveside
 And creepers spread across the grave

His lover's physical beauty described in lines 58–65 clearly depicts the Troubadour ideal of love, that is, of "what the eyes have made welcome to the heart." Some of the imagery is drawn from the African landscape. Diamonds, found primarily in southern Africa, are sought after, valuable, and rare. We could infer that hers was a rare beauty, found only in Africa. Her hair is compared to the ashes of tambuti wood, her string of beads to the colours of the sky, her breasts to two hills and her dress to the night sky. The poem has come full circle, returning in verses five and six to the predominant use of nature imagery. Whereas nature literally set the scene for a love proposal in verses one and two, contributing to their emotional state, in verses five and six, nature is evoked as a metaphor. In the first case, Raditladi is like the nature poets, the English romanticists, who influenced him; in the second, he taps into his African sensibilities. "The deeper the roots of the poet in a specific African tradition, the more use of animal and plant imagery" (Ojaide 1996, p. 28).

2.6 Conclusion

In the first section of the analysis, it is apparent that the poet had to reject his duty regarding a customary internal and arranged marriage, and embrace the modern notion of opening up one's heart to another person and a shared feeling of love.

In the second section haunted by the sense that he had called down the wrath of the ancestors by adopting modern ways of love, and taunted by the sense that the traditionalist in-laws had used witchcraft to harm him, the poet struggles with his pain and loss. The use of cattle imagery to describe his fiancée, respect in following the *"bogadi"* custom and his use of the plural /*re*/ (we) suggest that he indeed desired a traditional Batswana wife in terms of her role in the family, mothering children, caring for orphans and the elderly and giving of her labour. Modern in his desire for a person to person love relationship and traditional in his adherence to the Batswana social roles for men and women in marriage, he has further challenged the status quo by his choice of an educated woman. He believes that an educated woman would lead people to overcome attitudes that he perceives are backward, an impediment to progress. In his eulogy in the final section, he praises his fiancée's physical beauty, thus conveying the modern Troubadour ideal of love.

Like Seretse and Dithole, Raditladi exercised freedom of choice in love, following the heart, and going outside the tribe to marry. Such bravery invites inexplicable repercussions, but breaks down barriers for future generations. Raditladi's dilemma and the accompanying mental anguish were experienced by Dithole and almost certainly by Seretse in real life. Raditladi's belief that the time had come for women to be educated was progressive in his day. From a present perspective, however, their imposed role within marriage might be viewed as

reproducing the social inferiority of women, who, no matter how loved, nevertheless remain subject to or owned by fathers and husbands.

Africans continue to inhabit a world of contrasts; to navigate and negotiate traditional and modern modes of living. Should the question at present be asked: are we in need of new models and norms for love relationships and marriage?

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¹ Matjila, DS and K Haire "A world of Contrast in Traditional Love and Marriage: Myth and Symbol 2(3) 2009

CHAPTER 3

Cattle motif: The African and Batswana sensibilities

3.1 Introduction

Raditladi's poetry is inhabited by images of cattle to describe social, cultural, economic and historical environments. In this chapter the focus is on cattle, as they play a significant part in the life of Batswana. Traditionally cows are the most prized possession of the Batswana. Life centres around cattle-rearing and breeding, which is a revered occupation and every Motswana boy has been a herdboys at some time in his life (Plaatje, 1982). Cattle provide for everyday needs. The cow's milk feeds children of all ages; the elderly use its milk to prepare food and in their tea; the cow's hide is used to make clothes, shoes, hats, *makgabe* (strings worn in front by girls and women), rugs and *karosses*; the horn is used to call men to the *lekgotla* (meeting place), to gather an age-set for a given assignment or to warn women and children in case of attack; *boloko* (cow dung) is used in the construction of huts, as well as to polish the floor of the hut, while *dibi* (dung cakes) are used as fuel; and the cow's bones are used as divination bones.

During festivals and celebrations, cows are slaughtered to feed the guests. The dead are wrapped in the hide of a black cow; *mogoga* is served to mourners, that is, the meat of the same cow, prepared without spices or salt, since a funeral is not a time of celebration. The rich are expected to lend cattle to the poor, for ploughing and for the supply of milk, a practice known as *mafisa*. Good and kind people are compared with a cow that produces milk. Providing a people's everyday needs renders the cow sacred.

Raditladi's anthology has thirty five poems and he uses images of cattle in twenty-one of these poems. His poetry, therefore, is full of allusions to cattle and their significance to the lives of the Batswana. (Rosenburg,1982:91), in his article, 'Literature and folklore', makes this apt observation:

Writers mature within a culture; they learn their skills and their craft within that culture; and so inevitably reflect some aspects of that culture in their writing.

Cattle were central to the life of Raditladi as he grew up. He was surrounded by objects, entities and items of cattle. The language of his people reflected cattle icons. Raditladi was taught and trained in the language of cattle, and later he unearthed this knowledge through his language and thought process.

3.2 Theoretical Understandings

Afrocentricity is the paradigm that underpins this study. The objective of afrocentrism is to generate knowledge that frees and empowers Africans (Mazama 2003). Afrocentricity questions the march of European culture, with its values and worldview paraded as the only culture and its values as neutral (Mazama, 2003:4). In a relatively new field of inquiry, the quest for methods is also new. That there is still a need to define an afrocentric cultural aesthetic, for example, betrays the continuous dislocation of Africans from their own peculiar and collective centres (Welsh-Asante, 2003:220), and the extent to which Europe has dominated the mental space generally and the academic disciplinary space in particular.

Negritude, a pan-Africanist literary movement that resisted cultural assimilation, is one of the intellectual foundations informing the afrocentric cultural aesthetic. (Asante, 1988:104), (Mazama, 2003:16). Afrocentricity rejects the negritudist notion of "cultural incompleteness" but shares the notion of a "cultural matrix shared by Africans", (Mazama, 2003:18–19), based upon common origins and a shared history. From Welsh-Asante's Nzrui aesthetic model (2003) the analytical

construct, motif, has been selected. Motif is defined as the "incorporation and use of symbols in artistic product that reflect a specific culture and heritage." (Welsh-Asante, 2003). Biology, culture and history determine our identity. The collective memory bank of a people houses images, symbols and rhythms based on history and myth (Welsh-Asante, 2003).

A case in point is none other than a salient motif in Afrikaans literature which is the "farm" as embodied in the Afrikaner "*plaasroman*" ("farm novel"). The "farm," an image drawn from Afrikaner history, typically appeals to Afrikaner sensibilities and validates identity. Similarly, the use of proverbs, a cultural linguistic practice familiar to Africans, regardless of locality, might be considered a pan-African motif, validating identity. In the African context, proverbs are meaningful, not just poetically in literature (be it story or song), but as they are used in daily life, to record history and comment on what is happening. That these proverbs need to be explicated often (even in translation) to non-African readers, suggests their cultural embeddedness. This links up relevantly with Raditladi's allusion to proverbs which avers, affirms and validates the African and Batswana cultural identity.

Raditladi employs oral art forms to challenge stereotypical views of both the art forms and the people – the Batswana and other Africans in particular – who most frequently use them. What is particularly at stake here is the contestation over identity between Raditladi and those who think poetry does not exist in African languages, who in his opinion unwittingly expose their ignorance in their attempt to undermine the cultural integrity of the Batswana and presumably, of other South Africans.

3.3 Images of cattle in poetry

For many African peoples throughout the continent including black southern Africa, cattle are inextricable from identity; cattle have been their lifeline through countless generations; there is an affective identification with them, and frequently a reverence toward them. This chapter aims to highlight Raditladi's afrocentric portrait by putting Africans back at the centre of their history and restoring African agency. Afrocentricity is a fitting paradigm, and cattle a culturally appropriate pan-African analytical construct. The following extracts are evidence to this argument and examination will prove their validity:

3.3.1 Robala Ngwanaka (Good night my child)

*Rraago ke maaba a tšhwaretse
O nkabetse phatswana maloba
Mašwi a yona e tsoga e a gasitse
Kgomo ya me botlhe ba a e tshaba*

**Your father is a generous donor
He gave me black and white cow
Its milk will be scattered everywhere
Everybody is fearful of my cow**

The above is an extract from a lullaby by Raditladi. A lullaby is a soothing song usually sung to children before they go to sleep. According to (Wikimedia Encyclopedia), lullabies originated in England in the late 1300s, which is questionable, since baby cuddling is a global phenomenon. It is believed that all mothers and babysitters have been singing lullabies to children since time

immemorial with the idea that the song sung by a familiar and beautiful voice will lull the child to sleep. Lullabies written by established classical composers are often given the form-name *berceuse*, which is French for lullaby, or cradle song.

One of the most popular lullabies of the English language also well known to the African fraternity through schooling pioneered by missionaries is:

Hush little baby
 Hush little baby, don't say a word
 Papa's going to buy you a mockingbird
 And if that mockingbird don't sing
 Papa's gonna buy you a diamond ring

(<http://parenting.ivillage.com/newborn/ncrying/0,,b6wp,00.html>)

In Raditladi's lullaby, the singer is cuddling the child to sleep. She is telling the baby that her father is a generous allotter, *maaba a tšhwaretse*. The father gave this cow to the babysitter, *o nkabetse phatswana maloba*, so that she could look after the child properly. With its milk, *mašwi a yona*, the babysitter will feed the baby. The singer also tells the baby that people are afraid of her cow. No one will ever milk it other than the babysitter herself. The babysitter is reassuring the child to feel secure and protected as nothing untoward will happen to her. Raditladi's poem portrays Setswana traditional culture where lullabies have images of cows. This is a reminder that the Batswana and cattle were inseparable. Even before a child was born, cows were exchanged to cement the relationship. In Setswana, when a married woman becomes pregnant, especially when carrying the first born child, she is sent back to her parents to give birth to the baby.

The family of the groom will send a cow to be taken to the bride's home to supply milk for the first-born baby and his/her mother, since the first child was

customarily born at the mother's place of residence. Lullabies, as indicated above, "originated" in England. The practice of cuddling children is a universal one. People from all walks of life had a way of soothing their children.

The lullaby is sensitive to the child's culture and well-being. The singer of the lullaby alludes to images surrounding the child. She/he is not talking about a mocking bird and diamond ring, as they are strange and unknown to a Motswana child who hears sounds and sees images familiar to his/her environment. According to Braithwaite, "the poetry, the culture itself, exist not in a dictionary but in the tradition of the spoken word" (1987, p.17). The singer promises something with which the child can identify. When the child listens to the song, whether she understands it or not, she is comforted. This also shows the importance of the cow to Batswana. From an early age, children are introduced to cows; they are taught about the importance of cows even before they start speaking. The child listens to a lullaby that comforts and soothes him/her while learning the melody, the words and the message. This gives the child a good foundation. Lullabies are still very popular among the Batswana.

By glancing at the lines of Raditladi's lullaby, one cannot miss the rhyming words on the printed page. Before even pronouncing the sounds, one is attracted to this rhyme format, which makes a serious statement about what one is about to receive from the musical words in print:

Rraago ke maaba a tšhwaretse (a)

O nkabetse phatswana maloba (b)

Mašwi a yona e tsoga e a gasitse (a)

Kgomo ya me botlhe ba a e tshaba (b)

The abab rhyme system is used to create the rhythm of a mother cuddling the baby to sleep. This system has been employed throughout the poem. Assonance of the vowel /a/ repeated twenty four times in four lines is yet another technique to add a melody to the song. The following examples are known by many mothers and baby-sitters:

From birth, the child is introduced to his/her culture through the potent tool of song, which of course is very close to poetry. The following examples are known by many mothers and babysitters:

Ngwana robala

Ngwana robala

Kwa dikoloing

Tsa makgoanyana

O tla bopula ke mang

Mmaago o ile masimong

Sleep tight my baby

In the wagon

Of white children

Who will carry you on the back

Your mother has gone to the fields

Singing a lullaby is like a rhythmic dance that encourages one to rock back and forth in a rhythmic way; the mother turns herself into a rocking chair. When the baby starts to fall asleep, the mother starts humming, continuing her back and forth rhythmic action until the baby is asleep. *Mmaago o ile masimong* signifies the life of the times – the burden mothers had to share with their husbands. The child is not only listening to the melody but learns practical lessons about the life

surrounding him/her as well. There are many lullabies such as *mosimanyana*, *selina*, *didimala Maria*, *Ithobalele sa mma*, *kunkurulele*, *Mmammati*, *Khukhu*, *Butinyana* in the Setswana literature.

Raditladi's lullaby adds to the bigger pool of Setswana literature. Lullabies emerged from oral literature and transcended into written form fairly recently. Lullabies introduce children to the world human progression as part of their informal education. As part of oral literature, lullabies mirror a peoples' culture, mores, practices, values and religion. The composer of a lullaby portrays the social, natural, cultural and historical environments of a given period; he/she illustrates human behaviour and the political climate under which people live by using the images, descriptions and metaphors that spark his/her imagination. As lullabies are recited or sung to children at a tender age, they form the basis of the children's education in terms of language and philosophy of life.

3.3.2 Motlhokagae (A Sojourner)

Bagaetsho ba ne ba ntsenya tlhalefo[
Ba mpopela kgomo ya mmopa ya lela
Namane ya yona ka bo ka e kotela

I was amused by my folk
They created a clay cow for me and it mooed
I even kept its calf at bay during milking

Motlhokagae is a homeless person. He moves from one area to another looking for a place of abode. As already explained in the introduction, Raditladi refers to Tshekedi's accusation in 1937 claiming that Raditladi impregnated Bagakgametse and that the new born child of Bagakgametse belonged to

Raditladi. Raditladi was astonished by his family's silence on the matter. He could not grasp how his own uncle could accuse him of such a despicable act and was perplexed at the lack of support from other members of the royal family and the BaNgwato people at large. To him, the BaNgwato believed his uncle's unfounded allegations. The fact that he served his sentence in exile banished from his fatherland for many years hurt him terribly. He was framed in such a way that it was impossible to prove his innocence. In fact he was not even given an opportunity to prove that he was not guilty. To make matters worse even the findings of the commission of inquiry did not matter to Tshekedi. In his eyes Raditladi was guilty as charged and had to go. Refer to addendums (1–27).

Raditladi was a sojourner, moving from one place to another searching for a homely environment. He was not a man who wanted to dwell in one place. Soon after leaving Serowe he was on the move again. For six years he worked as an interpreter for the Protectorate station in Tshabong, then in 1944, he was transferred to Ngamiland to work in the Tsetse-fly department. Raditladi's brilliance and eloquence soon caught the attention of the regent, Pulane, who invited him to become the Secretary for the Batswana Tribal Administration. Refer to addendums (1–27).

Morton and Ramsay agree that the poem *Motlhokagae* is based on the relationship between Tshekedi and Raditladi. "Tshekedi had a profound impact on Leetile (Raditladi)'s subject matter. His poems such as "*Motlhokagae*" in *Sefalana sa Menate*, centre around his conflict with Tshekedi ..." (1987:98).

Again the image of a cow comes into the picture. Usually small boys like playing with clay; they make cows out of it; imitate a lowing cow while playing; let the bulls fight for a cow; create a span of oxen that plough the field; and make ox-wagons and other utensils used for cattle farming. All these objects they create are non-living creatures. When the poet says *ba mpopela kgomo ya mmopa ya*

lela, he means it, metaphorically; they were fabricated to give an inanimate object the characteristics of a living being. It is impossible for an object made of clay to make a sound. This shows that the Batswana take their images from everyday life. Milking a cow and keeping its calf at bay is what a Motswana boy does daily.

In Raditladi's days, the important life lessons that a Motswana herdboys had to learn were embedded in proverbs based on the work of cattle-herding, such as the following: "*Tlogatloga o tloga gale, modisa wa kgomo o tswa natso sakeng*" or *tlogatloga e tloga natso, thupa ya dikgomo e kgetlwa di eme* meaning punctuality and consistency is essential for herd-boys. During Raditladi's era, the Batswana practised the philosophy that was contained in their proverbs and idioms. There was no distinction between ideology and practical life. The following example shows how a person could depend on cattle for comfort:

3.3.3 Moratwa yo o tlhadilweng (A divorced lover)

Mariga a tsenye nna ke tla dika ke eme
Ka lata menomasweu khunwana ya me

It is winter I will take a break (from crop farming)

To collect Menomasweu my red-brown cow

A divorced lover is worried because winter is approaching and there is no one to keep him company. He says he will fetch *Menomasweu* the red-brown cow to keep him warm. This does not suggest that he will sodomise the cow. It is a symbolic reference to a cow and its significance. He says that his cow will make him forget his worries. If he can have its milk in the evening before going to bed, he will not feel as cold as it would have been without *Menomasweu's* milk. This could also imply that after his wife divorced him, he draws his strength from his

cows as perhaps the only treasure he has left. Unlike people, cows are predictable and always happy to serve their master. His wife has divorced him, but the red-brown cow will be his possession until the end of time. As indicated in chapter two and again below, traditionally, and still in Raditladi's time, a Motswana woman is expected to serve her husband in marriage and is considered a gift and possession. Again this is evidence of how the Batswana worship this creature. If it can bring comfort, it means it provides a good life to the Batswana. He compares the warmth he received from his wife with that of the cow. Hence a Setswana proverb "*Lesilo la kgomo ga le tlhalešwe*" meaning a people who think they do not need help from cattle owners are fooling themselves. The above assertion holds water because cattle are needed as a bridal gift. Yet another image of the cow symbol is found in the following poem, albeit from different perspective:

3.3.4 Selelo sa morati (A lovers' lament)

Bogadi jwa me jwa wela ka lebitla
Tse dikhunwana tsa fapoga Bakgatla

My bridal gift fell into the grave
Red-brown cows evaded Bakgatla

The old Setswana tradition of *bogadi* is still prevalent today. When the poet says "*Bogadi jwa me jwa wela ka lebitla*" he does not necessarily refer to the cattle that were lost. *Bogadi* is a symbolic reference to the marriage indenture. In this case, it is not the cattle as such that are important, but the bond they were supposed to cement. This idea is further emphasized by the following line: "*Tse dikhunwana tsa fapoga Bakgatla*". In Setswana tradition and African culture in general, cattle were the only mode of exchange considered for this priceless gift.

Images of cattle can also be used to describe behavioural characteristics, deeds or etiquette. As cattle are used for various things in people's lives, their features can be used to symbolize people's personalities. The following example denotes the use of cattle for a certain trait:

3.3.5 Lentswe la moledi (The protester's voice)

Fa ke le phologolo ke lekaba

Lefatshe leno la moledi leina

If I am an animal I am a pack ox

The world of a weeping person does not exist

Lentswe la moledi is a protest poem. The poet protests about many kinds of oppression, namely racial, tribal and lineal. At the beginning, he alludes to the arrival of foreigners in his motherland. They came to Africa to work for him not subject him under their control. When Europeans touched Africa's soil for the first time it was during their voyages of discovery, and their main objective was to get refreshments from Africa but they ended up colonizing African countries. He also complains about his leader who, he says, does not protect him from the intruders.

He continues to accuse his leader of not being even-handed; he is partial in his treatment of his subjects. Some people are given good treatment while others are treated with contempt. Raditladi complains about a lack of democracy in his land. His leader does not want opposition; he has surrounded himself with "yes-men". He also gives advice to his leader that when you are at loggerheads with your subject, you should not expel him. If you banish or exile him he will call you names and people will believe what he says. This is yet another allusion to Raditladi's conflict with Tshekedi.

As already indicated in the introduction, the Raditladi and Ratshosa brothers were banished from their motherland. The Ratshosa brothers were humiliated at Kgotla in full view of the Bamangwato people. The poet is complaining about his state as a sojourner, like he does, in *Motlhokagae. E re o lwa le motho o se mo leleke, O se mo ntshe mo lefatsheng la gagwe* means even if you have differences with your subject, do not expel him from his motherland.

Raditladi compares himself to an ox that is used to carry goods, *lekaba*. As far as he is concerned, he has been abused like a pack-ox. During kgosi Kgama's era, before Tshekedi was appointed as regent, he served the Bamangwato with dedication. The new regime was as hopeless as the colonizer whose main objective was to exploit African people. When Raditladi's literary predecessor, Sol Plaatje, "our first Motswana man of letters" (Shole 2004:iii), protested the oppression of black South Africans having to labour to pay extortionate taxes imposed by the coloniser, he used a similar image: "... the dumb pack-ox, being inarticulate in the Councils of State, has no means of making known to its 'keeper' that the burden is straining its back to breaking point." (Plaatje 1982:19). This again indicates images of Batswana from the cattle kingdom. Peasants and serfs are referred to as *lekaba*. The poet recognizes that it is essential to use the resources which have always been there, resources that are relevant to the Batswana and African sensibilities.

There is definitely a wealth of images that can be created from the realm of cattle. This shows that Batswana were reliant on cattle. Their life revolved around cattle which became their hope, their faith and their reverence. Cattle became a place where their trust resided. It is interesting to note that the level of wealth was also determined by the number of cattle people possessed. The following example illustrates this:

3.3.6 Aferika (Africa)

Lefatshe leno ke la kgomo

Lefatshe leno ke la khumo (Raditladi 1975: 20)

This is the land of cattle

This is the land of riches

Wealth is measured by the number of cattle people have. When the poet says *lefatshe leno ke la kgomo*, it means there are many cattle and there is sufficient food in the land. In every village people who had many cattle were highly respected. At the tribal court, a man guilty of a crime would be fined one or two cows depending on the severity of the crime. In *Bogosi Kupe* (Kingdom is sacred), Tukisang is fined two cattle after failing to provide any evidence in Kgotla that his nephew, Obakeng, stole the fencing wire. (Monyaise, 1967: 19)

The Batswana have a saying that “*Ya mosimane ke e nkgwe*” meaning a man who does not have cattle is treated like a small boy. If a man is found guilty and does not have cattle, he will have to lie down and be beaten on his buttocks like a boy. *E nkgwe* refers to a stick or hide that is used for thrashing.

Furthermore, men who did not have cattle were not free to air their views at the *kgotla* as they were afraid that they may say something which might lead them into trouble; it is humiliating to be publicly thrashed at the *kgotla*. Men who had cattle were free and confident to speak their minds at the *kgotla* knowing that even if they got into trouble, they would pay a fine. The only way of surviving if found guilty, was to escape and ask asylum from the queen. If the chasing men could not reach the culprit before reaching the queen’s house, they had to give up. For a grown man to run away from *kgotla* was also embarrassing.

In the above example, Raditladi uses the images of cattle to depict the living conditions, but in the following example, he touches on the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the people. He uses the same images as the ones above to portray serenity and quietness:

3.3.7 Fatshe la Batswana(Land of the Batswana)

Fatshe la dikgomo, fatshe la mabele

Fatshe la mašwi a elelang jaaka metse

Mašwi a dikgomo di gangwang di robetse

Land of cows, land of sorghum

Land where milk flows like water

Milk of cows milked reclining

The land of cattle and sorghum represents an environment that is peaceful and quite. The overflowing milk represents wealth, like Canaan the land of milk and honey, and cows that are milked while reclining depicts the slow pace of life as compared to the fast life in big cities. Cows are used to describe scenes, feelings and aspirations.

From the above discussion, it is apparent that cattle are very significant to the Batswana. Raditladi brings yet another component which is important for the survival of the cattle. No matter how important cattle are, they depend on water and grass for their survival. Without rain there would not be any plants and without plants there would not be any cattle. The following poem is about natural vegetation:

3.3.8 Lenaga (Landscape)

Lenaga kana le lentle letlhafula

Le lentle thata fa dipula di tsora

Bojang bo le botala dikgomo di fula

Landscape is so beautiful in spring

So beautiful when the rains descend

When the grass is green and cattle are grazing

Raditladi's poetry was influenced by English poetry, especially the poetry from the Romantic era of Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge and many others. Wordsworth declared: "poetry take its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity (Lyrical Ballads 1800:188) and Coleridge believed that a strong, active imagination could become a vehicle for transcending unpleasant circumstances.

Many of Coleridge's poems are powered exclusively by imaginative flights, wherein the speaker temporarily abandons his immediate surroundings, exchanging them for an entirely new and completely fabricated experience. Using the imagination in this way is both empowering and surprising because it encourages a total and complete disrespect for the confines of time and place. These mental and emotional flights are often well rewarded. Perhaps Coleridge's most famous use of imagination occurs in "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison" (1797), in which the speaker employs a keen poetic mind that allows him to take part in a journey that he cannot make physically. When he "returns" to the bower, after having imagined himself on a fantastic stroll through the countryside, the speaker discovers, as a reward, plenty of things to enjoy from inside the bower

itself, including the leaves, the trees, and the shadows. The power of imagination transforms the prison into a perfectly pleasant spot (Wikimedia).

Likewise in *Lenaga*, Raditladi is looking at nature as it is. He looks at the trees, the grass and flowers. This is the very same scenario he paints in *Selelo sa Morati* in the preceding chapter. In *Selelo sa Morati*, Raditladi portrays nature as playing a significant role for the theme of his poem by mentioning still shadows, green grass and sundry flowers. The beautiful surroundings serve to create the serene and tranquil mood for such important talks. In *Lenaga*, Raditladi mentions that it was spring, whereas in *Selelo sa Morati* he uses symbols and allusions that allow the reader to make an inference. Flowers are a symbol of love; the poet mentions, the area was surrounded by flowers of different species. The colours displayed a splendid spectacle; the flowers were prettier than anything one can imagine; they were out-shining the colours of the rainbow. This is the kind of beauty that makes the heart overflow with pleasure. While relaxing and admiring the scenery, the poet feels truly alive.

Raditladi's rendition reminds one of Wordsworth interpretation of imagination as a powerful, active force that works alongside our senses, interpreting the way we view the world and influencing how we react to events. He believed that a strong imaginative life is essential for our well-being. Often, in Wordsworth's poetry as well as in Raditladi's, the intense imaginative effort translates into the great visionary moments of poetry.

Coleridge, Wordsworth, and other romantic poets praised the unencumbered, imaginative soul of youth, finding images in nature with which to describe it. According to their formulation, experiencing nature was an integral part of the development of a complete soul and sense of personhood. The death of his father forced Coleridge to attend school in London, far away from the rural idyll of his youth, and he lamented the missed opportunities of his sheltered, city-bound

adolescence in many poems, including “Frost at Midnight” (1798). Raditladi was also forced to leave his birthplace, and went to cities like Kimberley and Francistown. He was not happy to live in the big cities, as shown in the poem *Lefatshe la Batswana*.

He recalls his boarding school days, during which he would both daydream and lull himself to sleep by remembering his home far away from the city, and the speaker tells his son that he will never be removed from nature, the way the speaker once was. In the same poem, Raditladi also complains about the noise made by machines and trains in the cities, and is making a special appeal to go back home and listen to the sweet melody of the birds (Wikimedia).

The poet describes the beauty of nature. He says *Lenaga le lentle letlhafula* meaning nature is so beautiful in spring. The beautiful surroundings serve to create a happy mood. From the description of the surroundings one gets the feeling that the land is fertile. He continues to say *Le lentle fa dipula di tsora*, the first rains after winter, known as *kgogolammoko* (rain after harvest which clears away the chaff left on the threshing floor) begin to fall and suggests that this spectacle is only complete by the phrase *dikgomo di fula*. It is as if the picture remains incomplete if there are no living beings in the beautiful surroundings. In this instance, the image has been used as an ornament.

The above example is of the beauty of nature created by vegetation, that is, the trees, the grass and the flowers. This kind of beauty is incomplete without other elements such as water, reptiles, beasts and birds. The following example is also about the landscape:

3.3.9 Thamalakane (*Thamalakane river*)

Thamalakane, kgomo ya lotsetse

O kare e ka roromisa thele
Ya fepa basimane ba motse
Ka lobese ba sa le lopelele

Thamalakane, the cow that has calved
I wish it can shake its udder
To feed the village boys
With milk without begging it

Thamalakane is the name of the Okovango River in Botswana that provides water to farmers and the community at large. The poet compares the river with a cow that has just calved. *Kgomo ya letsetse* is very essential to the family. It has just added another member to the kraal, increasing number of cattle in the kraal. As *lotsetse*, it produces first milk after calving, a delicacy to boys known as *kgatsele*. *Thamalakane* brings happiness to people providing them with the water they use for cooking, washing and drinking, just like *kgomo ya letsetse* does. The image *roromisa thele* suggests the plentiful provision of milk. *Kgomo ya lotsetse* should not hide milk, but shake the udder and give everything it has. If the river produces much milk like the water flowing in the *Thamalakane*, children will feel their stomachs; The *Thamalakane* gives people water without asking, just like *kgomo ya lotsetse*.

There is clearly an analogous relationship between water and milk. Water, whether river water, ocean water or rain, gives and sustains life; water is the most essential sustenance to all living forms: people, animals and plant life. Similarly cattle, to the Batswana, give and sustain life, are essential for survival. The following example demonstrates this assertion:

3.3.10 Lewatle (*The Ocean*)

Lewatle kana o ka le raa maina
Wa re ke khunwana ya letsetse,
Fa ruri o le bona le maramara
Kgotso wa ba wa re ke ditshetšhwana
Di fula kwa nageng di itebetse
Fa ruri o le bona le kelera
Kgotso wa ba wa re ke legadima
Fa o le bona ruri le phašama

Oh-you can bequeath few names to the ocean
 You may call it a nursing red-brown cow
 When the waves are moving up and down
 Or you may assume it is springboks
 Peacefully grazing in the veldt
 When you spot it moving to and fro
 You may consider it lightning
 When it is raging in anger

Raditladi compares the ocean to a nursing cow that has large quantities of milk in her udder and feels uncomfortable. The nursing cow would like to feed its calf, hence it is moving up and down to draw the attention of the calf to come and suckle. The movement of the cow is likened to the to and fro movement of ocean waves. When there is no storm, the ocean is as quiet and peaceful as the springbuck grazing in the field. When strong winds blow, the ocean rages in anger, making frightening sounds like thunder and lightning . The poet is displaying the different characteristics of the ocean, which implies an unpredictable temperament.

By comparing the ocean to the cow, the poet looks at its positive qualities. The ocean provides water to rivers and dams; animals and people get their water from rivers as well as dams; and the ocean contains living animals and plants which serve as food to people. Even if the poet was comparing the movement of the sea to a wanting cow, there remain many similarities between the two. In the following example, Raditladi uses the image of a lowing cow to demonstrate the formation of rain:

3.3.11 Pula (*Rain*)

Kgomo ya ga rre e lelela tennyanteng
E letse malatsi a le mantsi digobo
E bile mašwi a yona a tletse dithobeng
E duma e se na epe pelo ya ditshebo

My father's cow is lowing far away
It has not fed its calf for many days
Its milk is scattered in the puzzle bushes
It thunders/roars/rumbles ...

Rain is very important to sustain life on earth; it is a life giving force to living beings; and it fills rivers, ponds, lakes and dams. The poet compares two images. The formation of clouds in preparation of rain with a cow that needs to feed its calf. The cow has been away for many days, and is eager to go home and feed its calf. The collision of clouds and cracking sounds of thunder and lightning are compared with the lowing of the cow. A cow that has spent many days in the bush is like rain that has not poured for a long time. The cows' full udder drips with milk. It is like water that the clouds can no longer contain. The milk was scattered all over the puzzle of bushes. Raditladi here expresses the symbolic significance of wasted milk or rain. The cow is lowing to tell the calf not to worry,

as she is on her way home. Rain is as important to the Batswana as the milk, because it not only provides them with water but also waters the grass that feeds the cow.

Batswana writers and writers about the Botswana frequently use the imagery of rain, which is as, if not more, important than cattle, since grass requires water to grow and if there is drought there will be no grass and the cattle will die. “Every drop of rain to a person born and raised in a desert is a gift from heaven. Rainfall is prized above every other thing – as it means life. For rain to fall upon any occasion is a positive omen. If it rains, all will be well. Blessings will follow – success, peace, joy” (Mbanga 2005:135). The devastating drought of 1965–66 saw the loss of some 250,000 cattle in Bechuanaland. Famine followed in its wake, forcing the country’s leader, Seretse Kgama, to seek international aid in England and the USA (Mbanga 2005:357). Not only Botswana, but many African countries that are also reliant on cattle, are likewise susceptible to such devastating losses. However, while drought is a major threat to cattle, the beasts that roam the veldt are another danger to them. The following poem reveals the relationship between beasts and domestic animals:

3.3.12 Tau (The Lion)

Nna ke phura kgomo ke phure le motho
Ke phure le badisa ba dinamane
Nna mmusi kgomo e lale le dinamane

I grind the cow and the person
 I grind a herdboys and the calves
 I bring the cow back to sleep with the calves

In this poem, the lion is bragging about its fighting skill and power. It claims that it can crush and grind; it kills cattle and people. The cows are afraid to spend the night in the veldt and go to the kraal to sleep with the calf. This helps the calves not to go hungry, as their mothers will come home. There is a deeper symbolic meaning to the above image. Raditladi is a victim of conflict within the Bamangwato royal family. This image is similar to the one in Tshekeledi's poem "*Badisa ba yona re ne ra nna botlhale; Ka re e bona e phatlhalatsa bakotedi*". The interpretation was that Raditladi banished the Ratshosa brothers as well as Raditladi from Serowe. Raditladi is referring to a dictator who oppresses his followers indiscriminately. The dictator oppresses his subjects like the lion that grinds the cow and people: the herd-boy and the calf.

Cattle images that Raditladi uses appear to echo his own experiences in life. The image of a lion breaking and grinding bones reminds one of a sojourner who braves the cold winter and hot summer, dark nights and dense forests. The breaking and the grinding are fearsome sounds that reverberates anxiety and uneasiness. Raditladi was travelling as a solitary person under trying circumstances. Again Raditladi's generation depended mainly on stock and crop farming. Winter months were particularly unpopular, as is evident in the following poem:

3.3.13 Seetebosigo (*June*)

*Mašwi kwa sakeng a tla nyelela
Seetebosigo o dira selelo*

**Milk will vanish in the kraal
June will cause weeping**

Seetebosigo is the winter month of June. Usually during this season, there is no rain; the water is scarce and so is the grass. When there is no water and grass the cows will not have sufficient food and as a result will not produce enough milk. *Mašwi a tla nyelela* means milk will be scarce. The children will be affected because milk is their staple meal. If children are hungry, they will cry. There is a saying in Setswana that “*ngwana o lla tlala ga a lle phefo*” meaning children only worry about food not cold or chill weather.

Even during a time of turmoil and turbulence, a real *motswana* still thinks of his cows and creates concepts and symbols around the cow’s gesticulations. The following poem about war illustrates this:

3.3.14 Ntwa ya 1939 – 1945 (*War of 1939 – 1945*)

“Present arms” tlhobolo ra e baya diphatlheng

“Attention” ra mo ema sekgomo ya lotsetse

At “present arms” we placed our guns on our foreheads

At “attention” we stood like a cow being milked

The poet delineates the events of the First World War. The author describes the activities at the battle ground. The army is controlled by the general who give instructions that must be followed. The poet in the poem is alluding to orders that were given to soldiers. The general instructed soldiers to “present arms” and to stand at attention. Even when describing the scene of war, the poet uses the image of a cow so that this audience can understand vividly. He says, when the general ordered them to stand at attention, they all stood like *kgomo ya lotsetse*. When a *lotsetse* is feeding its calf, it stands motionless so that it will not disturb the sucking calf. This shows how a Motswana understands the behaviour, the

thinking and even the instinct of a cow. Even when they are warning people about danger that needs to be faced immediately, they will say “*Kgomo e wetse sedibeng*” meaning the cow has fallen into a pool.

They also say “*Ga e ke e gangwa ka mogogorwana namane e le teng*” *Mogogorwana* is made of the skin of a dead calf filled with dry grass and is used to lure and calm the cow that usually becomes wild and uncooperative.

As indicated earlier in the introduction, a cow was the *Motswana’s* real god. Immediately after birth, the baby is placed in a cradle made from the skin of a calf; when a person dies, he/she is wrapped in the skin of a black cow:

3.3.15 Motlhabani (*A soldier*)

Phate ya kgongwana o ne a sa e bewa
Setlhako lenaong a sa se bewa

He was not wrapped in a cow skin

There were no shoes on his feet

The cow is so sacred that it plays a pivotal role in the life of the Batswana from birth to death. The Batswana use a black cow to symbolise the period of grief and loss. The deceased is wrapped in a black skin to signify the dark period the family is going through. The principal mourner is said to be in *sefifi*, the state of darkness and an appropriate ritual will be performed referred to as "cleansing." The researcher reliably learned from a telephone interview with Russ Molosiwa (Setswana Language Practitioner and Chief Editor of the *Kutlwano Magazine*) that not all Batswana buried their dead in a black cow skin. He argues that some tribes used skins other than black. It is a common practice among the Batswana

when they meet at a funeral to use the idiom *re kopana kobong ya kgomo* , that is, meeting at the blanket of a cow.

Raditladi's use of cattle images is a demonstration of their importance to the Batswana's existence from beginning to end. Cattle nurture the Batswana from childhood to adulthood providing care, support and sustenance. They fill every space, every gap and every opening to make Batswana life complete. From Raditladi's images one appreciates the function and duty of cattle to the Batswana. They give Batswana physical, spiritual and mental therapy. From the legislative assembly at the *kgotla* to the execution of laws including the judicature, cattle occupy centre stage. Socially, they bring families and the community together through *bogadi* and *mafisa*.

Untoward behaviour can also be elucidated by using cattle images. Raditladi explicates the unbecoming conduct of poets by associating them with kicking cows:

3.3.16 Baboki ba dikgosi (Praisers of dikgosi)

Ba re kgomo thokwana e a raga
Thokwana e ragile le bagami

They say the brown cow kicks

The brown cow kicked even the milkers

Raditladi accuses poets of being sarcastic towards *dikgosi*. By using sarcasm, the speaker actually means the opposite of what is said. Someone who walks out the door hoping for sunshine, and finds sleet and freezing rain instead, might exclaim sarcastically: "What a great day!" Irony is when the opposite of what is literally said is what is actually meant. The contempt in this particular kind of

sarcasm is for the event described: it is not personal criticism. The speaker is disgusted by the bad weather. Raditladi says poets, as subjects, should not criticize *dikgosi* even if they are out of order. The poet says, by ridiculing *dikgosi*, they promote conflict between the *kgosi* and his subjects. Raditladi, being a proponent of change and transformation, means the opposite of what he is saying. He is actually praising the poets for exposing the truth. He is not reprimanding them, as the words appear. He uses the metaphor of a kicking cow:

Ba re kgosi thokwana e a raga means that *kgosi* is an oppressor, a despot, autocrat and cruel leader. Milkmen should not be kicked by the cow, as they look after it. The word *bagami* is used to refer to people who lead and help; give direction in their sphere. The poet uses irony because he himself is a victim of oppression. What he is indirectly saying is that poets have a licence to reveal the truth without being prosecuted. The lines from this poem are similar to the lines used in Tsheledi Kgama's praise poem. Tsheledi Kgama is referred as:

Kgomo e tsaletse nageng tubana
E tsaletse boMongolwane
Tshetlhana ya ga Kgama le Sekgoma
Ketiba ka tlhako ya mmaKgama
Bagami ba yona re ntse botlhale
Ka re bona e phatlhalatsa bakotedi
E ragile Joni le bomonnawe
 (Schapera, 1965: 230)

A chestnut cow calved in the veldt
 It calved at Mangolwane
 The yellow cow of Kgama and Sekgoma
 The hoof-stamper of Makgama
 We who milk it are being prudent

**For we saw it scatter the calf-boys
It kicked John and his younger brothers**
(Schapera's translation).

The poet here refers to how Tshekedi started a fight with the Ratshosa brothers. After taking over he expelled them from office, and when they retaliated, he burned their houses and sent them into exile.

The above example equates a devious poet with a kicking cow, as both are dangerous to *dikgosi* and milkmen alike. The metaphor of a kicking cow has been used in juxtaposition with sarcasm to make the image intense. In the following poem Raditladi uses images of cows to signal the time of day:

3.3.17 Kgosi Kgama (Kgosi Kgama)

*E rile ka moso bosigo bo sele
Phakela dikgomo di amusa marole*

**It was morning and the darkness was clearing
Very early when cows were suckling their calves**

The poet uses the image of *dikgomo* to indicate the time of day. *Bosigo bo sele* means very early in the morning. This is the time when cows are feeding their calves before leaving the kraal to go and graze in the veldt, that is, *phakela dikgomo di amusa marole*. In the past, this was the time when boys were woken up to milk the cows. Early morning is referred to as "*Mahube a naka tsa kgomo*". If boys do not wake up quickly, they are beaten with a stick or strap made from cow hide. They were to wash quickly and go straight to the kraal. If they were very slow, they were spanked more and went to the kraal without even washing

their faces, hence a saying that *o tla di gama o sa di tlhapela* (you will milk the cows before you wash your face) meaning you will get into trouble and definitely get a spanking.

Milking, herding and the care of cattle was the schoolroom for Batswana boys, inculcating the importance of promptness, punctuality, regularity, watchfulness and vigilance i.e. to be sure the bull does not sleep out of the kraal. It is also interesting to learn that most Batswana names revolve around cattle; *Mokotedi* is a person who must stand guard so the calf is not disturbed during the milking process, *Motshwarakgamelolo* is a person who holds the bucket or container during the milking process; *Mogami* is a person who milks the cow. Cattle were also used during ploughing; *Motshwarateu* is a person who leads the oxen. The two who hold the plough are *Motshwaramogoma* and *Mootledi* drives the oxen with a whip.

Raditladi's poetry contains quite a number of cattle images to describe the circumstances surrounding the Batswana. It is therefore not surprising that he divulges Sekgoma's marriage this way:

3.3.18 Lekgasa loo sekgoma (Sekgoma of Lekgasa regiment)

*Tse dinaana o di batlile kwa sekakeng
O di phuthile ka seatla di mo sakeng*

**He acquired red-brown cows from the dessert
He has brought them into the kraal**

Sekgoma is a sojourner. In 1897, when his father went to England, he was appointed as *motshwareledi* (acting *kgos*). After his father's return from England, Sekgoma and Kgama were soon at loggerheads. He accused his father of not

consulting him on issues of *kgotla*. His father, in turn, accused Sekgoma of plotting against him. His father expelled him together with his followers. His age-set Makgasa, remained loyal to him. He went home shortly before his father died. In 1923, he became *kgosi* but died shortly afterwards in 1925.

When the poet says *tse dinaana o di batlile sekakeng* he refers to his wife. The image used here suggests that Sekgoma married a foreigner without considering the tribe. As *kgosi*, he was supposed to marry within his people, a wife arranged for him. *Tse dinaana* represent *bogadi* or bridal gift. On his arrival from exile, he was accompanied by his wife and his son Seretse, who was still a toddler. Even though he married a foreigner in a foreign village, he brought his family to Serowe because *(kgomo) ga e phetsolele nageng*. The phrase *o di phuthile di mo sakeng* means order has been restored and the legitimate heir will continue the Bammangwato dynasty.

Raditladi uses the colours of cows such as *khunwana* and *naana* to denote bridal-gift or *bogadi*. The bridal-price signified productivity and multiplication hence only cows are used and not bulls. As cows are used to unite families, the milk from these cows is used to feed children. According to Raditladi's images, the Batswana associate a kind hearted person with a cow that produces a lot of milk. The following poem illustrates this point:

3.3.19. Isang a lentswe (*Isang* son of *Lenšwe*)

Nnaa kgomo ya Bakgatla ba e digetse kae?

Selelo sa yona se utlwala Mošomane

Mašwi a yona a tlhoka go gamelwa gae

Go gorisa basadi le basimane

Where did they banish the Bakgatla cow?

Its lowing is heard in Mošonane

It needs to come home for milking

To feed women and children

As indicated in the section on *Isang a Lentšwe*, the poet compares Isang with a cow. The comparison between the cow and Isang is relevant. Isang is the mother and father of his people, just like a cow is to the Batswana in general. Isang established schools for the community, improved farming conditions, created boreholes and modernised Bakgatla villages. He also raised the standard of living by changing Bakgatla's fate from being servants into masters. He encouraged boys and girls to go to school to free them from the shackles of dependence. He provided his people with the vision to become a free people. Just like the Batswana depend on a cow, the life of the Bakgatla depended on Isang. The phrase *Mašwi a yona a tlhoka go gamelwa gae* means Isang's ideas are mostly needed at home. Bakgatla need Isang to come and continue his good works. Bakgatla are thirsty for progress just like a calf is thirsty for its mother's milk. Isang is also eager to go back home and help his people, just like the lowing cow which needs to feed its calf. The words *tlhoka go gamelwa* infer that there is some kind of problem in the Kgatla village.

The righteousness of cows to Batswana is beyond compare. It has been postulated in the previous examples that cattle represent honesty, kindness, decency and integrity. They sacrifice every ingredient of their body parts, their produce and even their excretion to make the Batswana life comprehensive. It is for this reason that the Batswana believed:

"...fa o na le kgomo, o bua gangwe fela mongwe le mongwe a ba a reetsa....Ba itse gore ka kgomo o motho; kwa ntle ga yone o letlakala."

(Monyaise, 1967:22)

... if you have a cow, you speak once and everybody listens ... They were aware that if you own cows, you are a respectable person; if you do not have cows, you are a nonentity.

It is for this reason that every Motswana and Africans in general, want to own cattle. This is a determinant of their wealth and worth among their people. The following poem shows that raiding cattle among Africans was very rife during wars:

3.3.20. Kgosi Tshaka (Kgosi Tšhaka)

*Wa gata maoto a batho ba kgetha
Wa gapa tse di makoro di lema*

**You trampled on tax-payers legs
You confiscated the ploughing cattle**

The poet is giving a testimony on the effects of Shaka's wars. History has it that Shaka's wars were accompanied by great human slaughter and caused many migrations. Their effects were even felt far north of the Zambezi River. Because they feared Shaka, leaders such as Zwangendaba, Mzilikazi, and Soshangane moved northwards far into the central African interior and in their turn sowed war and destruction before developing their own kingdoms. Some estimate that during his reign, Shaka caused the death of more than a million people. Shaka's wars between 1818 and 1828 contributed to a series of forced migrations known in various parts of southern Africa as the *Mfecane*, *Difaqane*, *Lifaqane*, or *Fetcani*. Groups of refugees from Shaka's assaults, first the Hlubi and Ngwane clans, later followed by the Mantatise and the Matabele of Mzilikazi, crossed the Drakensberg to the west, smashing chiefdoms in their path. Famine and chaos

followed the wholesale extermination of populations and the destruction of herds and crops between the Limpopo and the Gariep River. Old chiefdoms vanished and new ones were created.

Raditladi describes how Shaka confiscated goods and cattle after defeating the tribes. Confiscating cattle left many tribes stranded and poor. The image of cattle looting evokes African history, as the looting of cattle was the most common act of war.

Raditladi's extensive use of cattle imagery demonstrates how essential cattle were to survival and to the way of life. As recently as 1966, drought caused the loss of some 250,000 cattle during a famine in Bechuanaland and President Seretse (together with Ruth) went to England and the USA for international support. Seretse, a pragmatist and man of vision, viewed livestock exports as the most feasible and democratic basis for economic development since the majority of the people owned cattle (Mbanga & Mbanga 2005:348).

Caribbean poet, Kamau Brathwaite, recalls how his sensibilities had become so alienated from his own natural environment that, as a poet, he would be more inclined to use the image of falling snow before that of the force of a hurricane; while it never snows in the Caribbean, hurricanes are a regular phenomenon! (Brathwaite, 1984: 8). He adds, that, even though he knew that the hurricane does not roar in iambic pentameter, it was a long journey to cultural re-discovery, decolonizing mind, imagination and heart, in order to find the appropriate poetic form, which in his case became the rhythm of the calypso. The above-mentioned extracts show that Raditladi, applied his mind when writing his poems. Even in instances where his creative mind was influenced by the writers of the Elizabethan period, he still uses images and symbols from the Batswana or African culture.

There is a place of convergence, where poems can be viewed in terms of a common human identity, becoming the entry point to understanding cultural diversity.

Raditladi is not the only creative mind in Setswana literature to use a cattle motif in re-storying the African and Batswana sensibilities. His predecessor, Sol Plaatje, the first writer who draws attention to the number of proverbs that originate on the pastures or at the cattle post (1916:8), believes that proverbs in particular, encapsulate the culture, identity and wisdom of the Batswana (Willan, 1984:82). Cattle feature prominently in the figurative language of proverbs and also in songs, stories, oral and written poetry. The proverb *kgomo go tsoswa e e itsosang* literally refers to a cow that has become lethargic in the summer drought due to the scarcity of grass. Herders prop a long stick under the cow to urge it to stand up. If the cow makes efforts to raise itself, then the herders assist it to its knees, revive it with water and help it to its feet. If, however, the cow shows no signs of helping itself, it will be slaughtered there in the veldt. In its figurative meaning, “heaven helps those who help themselves,” refers to the need to take initiative, to strive and to put forth an effort. Sol T. Plaatje has hitherto been portrayed in the research as the impeccable English gentleman.

In this study, it is argued that he was first and foremost an African and a Motswana, and that these sensibilities permeate his oeuvre. If one emphasizes the English influences on Plaatje, one might draw the conclusion that he had imbibed the Protestant work ethic, especially the values of the self-made man exemplified by the early missionaries to the Batswana, Moffat and Livingstone, as discussed in Comaroff and Comaroff (1991, ch.:1). Conversely, might it not be true to say that the Batswana cultural values embodied in the proverb just cited,

inspired and energized Plaatje, making him the man of many achievements and accomplishments that he was? And here another Setswana proverb comes to mind, namely *Moremogolo go betlwa wa taola wa motho o a ipetla*, which most aptly describes the way in which Plaatje took responsibility, striving to better himself, to change things and against all odds, put his vision into action.

There is another Setswana proverb, *kgomo ga e phetsolele nageng*, which literally means that while spending most of its time in the veldt, eating grass and drinking water from the well, sooner or later the cow must come back home, lest it forget where it belongs. Figuratively, it means that after a person has worked hard and travelled to many places, it is time to come home, not only to plough back but to return to the soil where the umbilical cord is buried, to die at home, and become an ancestor. This proverb encapsulates the life of Plaatje (1876–1932), a rural African, who travelled extensively and rubbed shoulders with the most progressive minds of his day including the women suffragettes in England and black American activists, Du Bois and Garvey in the USA. When he returned to be with his people in his later years, he ploughed back what he had learnt to his people especially, by compiling dictionary entries, collecting proverbs, folk narratives, praises and oral history in Setswana. As an ancestor, Plaatje “our first Motswana man of letters” (Shole, 2004:iii) was early in the fight for his African language to be recognized, and his legacy has inspired future generations of Setswana creative writers. Raditladi also left Serowe unceremoniously after he was expelled by his uncle Tshekedi. He later came back to Serowe after many years of sojourn before he was sent to Mahalapye as the chief’s representative.

As regards Plaatje, the freedom-fighter, whose life was lived selflessly for the larger cause of black South African emancipation from white oppression, his

mission has not yet been fully realized. Remaining in relative obscurity, he has not yet become the ancestor, the icon and role model he promises to be. It is expected that his *Native life in South Africa* will one day enjoy the same standing as its American counterpart, *The souls of black folk*, and furthermore, that his oeuvre will be taught in South African schools highlighting the, hitherto, neglected African and Motswana sensibilities that infuse Plaatje's oeuvre. It would be interesting to have a cursory look at how Plaatje uses the cattle symbol in his poetry in order to make a mental comparison to that of Raditladi.

3.4 Images of cattle in Plaatjes' readers

From this premise, it is imperative to view Plaatje's use of the cow image as the foremost writer in Setswana who influenced other authors such as Raditladi who came after him. Plaatje's three most important publications in English are used as examples: *The Mafikeng Diary*, *Native life in South Africa*, his political polemic, and *Mhudi*, an historical work of fiction to showcase the cattle motif as an important cultural trait of the Batswana . After defeating the enemy, it was the practice of the time that the victor would confiscate the cattle of the vanquished. This is also apparent in Sol Plaatje's three publications:

3.4.1 The Mafikeng diary of Sol T. Plaatje

Documenting the participation and contribution of Africans to "a white man's war", Plaatje's diary stands, then and now, as the only known account of the Siege of Mafikeng from an insider African perspective. Putting Africans back at the centre of their history and restoring African agency, it foregrounds the Batswana war

effort. While the Barolong Batswana chiefs were honoured by General Roberts after the siege, Plaatje records that General Baden-Powell denied the role of Africans to the commission of inquiry into the war and prevented the press from publishing an account of the part Africans played in the final deliverance of the city (editors' Epilogue, Plaatje, 1999).

The African's contribution to the defence of Mafikeng during the siege, mainly involved spying, dispatch-running and cattle-raiding. These acts of war were rendered the more heroic because Africans were typically either unarmed or partially armed. "Cattle-raiding was a dangerous business in which the crafty Barolong [Batswana], who belonged to the country, alone were well versed" (Plaatje, 1982:285). Cattle raids and the looting of oxen were important, not only as an act of war, but in terms of providing much-needed food for the garrison and the town during the siege. Cattle-raiding, drawn as it is from the tradition of African warfare predating the arrival of the Europeans, operates as a motif in Plaatje's diary, as do cattle generally.

As Plaatje experienced the siege personally while acting as interpreter for the dispatch runners, he exhibits the sensitivity and empathy of one immersed in the human situation. Moreover, he witnessed at first-hand the courageous acts of the Batswana. With feeling and evident pride, he details the cattle-raids led by Barolong Batswana headman, Mathakgong, whom he names "one of the unsung heroes of the siege." (Plaatje, 1999:133) whose boldness and bravery were recalled long after the siege. (Plaatje, Eds. 1999:195) After one unsuccessful raid in which over fifty cattle were killed and two men injured, Plaatje tells us that Mathakgong became indignant at "the clumsy European method of always revealing their intentions to the enemy" (1982:286). Plaatje seems to imply that it was the quiet, calm unobtrusiveness of the Africans that allowed them to operate covertly, as again when they assisted the only white man to cross enemy lines during the siege. Calm in the face of danger, Plaatje tells us, Batswana herdboys

“would quietly mind their stock or drive them home under a severe shell fire with the tenacity of the African in all matters where cattle are concerned” (Plaatje, 1999:59). The motif of cattle-raiding and shepherding thus reveals something about the unobtrusiveness and calm strength of the African.

Cattle, as noted in the introduction, are central to the traditional African and Batswana way of life, as portrayed by Raditladi also. Of the black African boy, Molema writes “The value of cattle was especially inculcated into him ... The cattle post was his training school and college and the cattle were his lessons.” (1920:121) From a tender age, an African boy would learn to care for kids and young livestock; around the age of ten, he would graduate to the care of calves; a little later, he would take care of full-grown goats and sheep; and finally, at puberty, to the herding of cattle (Molema, 1920).

He could not count beyond ten, but he knew if one cow was missing out of a hundred and was expected to find it by following its spoor. He knew each animal by memorizing the colours and the character (ibid.,21:2). The various breeds were known by names that describe their colours: *naana*, *phatswana*, *thamagana*, *tllhabana*, *tshwaana*, *tshungwana* and *nkgwana*, *khounou* and *khunwana* (reddish brown). That knowledge of cattle was so valuable and so revered was due to the importance of the occupation: “It must be remembered that the breeding and tending of cattle is the occupation most honored among the Bechuana,” Plaatje tells us elsewhere (Plaatje, as cited in Willan, 1996:217). The motif of cattle in Plaatje's diary, specifically cattle-raids and shepherding, appeal to black South African history and culture, thus validating an African cultural identity, and shattering the myth of “a white man's war” that lingers in the popular mind and imagination. Furthermore, Plaatje's affective stance, his evident pride in Batswana heroism, suggests deep-rootedness in his culture. In the following novel, Plaatje impresses with cattle which were lost to white farmers.

The knowledge of cattle alluded in Plaatje's work is discernible in Raditladi's creative genius. Raditladi's knowledge of cattle is detected through the use of many cattle images to represent graciousness and unkind, honour and notoriety, humility and arrogance, wild and tame, esteem and derision, rational and irrational as well as prudence and carelessness. In his poems *Lewatle*, *Selelo sa Morati*, *Robala Ngwanaka* and *Moratwa yo o tlhadilweng*, he uses colours of the breeds to describe the characteristics of his subject. In *Lentswe la Moledi* a pack-ox is an allegory of serfdom and slavery. Raditladi's preoccupation with cattle image in his writing, in the same way as could be found in Plaatje, is a matter that need not be emphasised. Nonetheless it paints an indigenous picture to which generations to come would always fall back to trace their roots.

3.4.2. Native life in South Africa

Of all the anti-Native laws conceived by white regimes in the history of European colonization in South Africa, no single measure has ever created so much misery and distress among the Natives as did the Natives' Land Act of 1913. (B. Willan Ed., 1996:254, in *Sol Plaatje. Selected writings*).

Overnight this piece of legislation dispossessed one million black South African farmers (out of a total black African population of approximately four and a half million) of their right to rent grazing and ploughing land, forcing them into the wage sector in mines or servitude on white farms, or to severely overcrowded and overgrazed tribal lands. As journalist and researcher, Plaatje toured the Orange Free State (renamed Free State in 1995) on his bicycle, gathering first-hand accounts of the effects of land dispossession instituted by the 1913 Native Land Act. Thus his writing comes from personal observation; seeing and knowing with his eyes and his heart in a spiritual sense. He recounts an incident in which a man and his wife, while fleeing, were ambushed and killed and their cattle stolen. The thief, a white man, found in possession of the stolen cattle, is not

convicted in the law courts thanks to the intervention of General Hertzog.

Plaatje's account of African families evicted from farms in the winter of 1913 exhibits empathy, as when he is deeply affected by the plight of a family forced to steal a grave in the night to bury a child. His empathy and pity extends to the dying cattle: "It may be the cattle's misfortune that they have a black owner, but it is certainly not their fault ..." (Plaatje, 1982:96). "Really until we saw those emaciated animals it had never so forcibly occurred to us that it is as bad to be a black man's animal as it is to be a black man in South Africa." (Plaatje 1982:124).

Surrendering herds of cattle to a white farmer; selling cattle off quickly at the best cash price; or moving them to limited pasturage in the locations, as the new legislation demanded; was nothing short of instant economic ruin and illegitimate gain for the whites. "These herds of cattle have been the natives' only capital, or the natives 'bank', as they truthfully call them, so that, deprived of this occupation, the downgrade of a people ... must be very rapid" (Plaatje 1982:177). The motif of cattle thus evokes the black African dependence on cattle for their livelihood. The motif of dying cattle is a poignant if indirect plea to save his people not only from economic ruin but from possible physical extinction. The motif of killing Africans to steal their cattle epitomises the ugly aim and reality of the Native Land Act, "a war of extermination."

Traditionally, cattle have been of supreme importance to all black South Africans, regardless of ethnicity. Cattle-rearing was the exclusive domain of men and essentially regulated tribal life; by means of cattle; men extended their social identities, communicated with the ancestors in ritual functions, or arranged marriages by which they acquired reproductive rights as well as the labour of women. (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991:145) In times of famine, for example, a cow was taken to the forest and left to roam freely as a sacrifice to appease the ancestors and ask for their blessings. Initially custom required only two cattle as

bogadi (cattle given in exchange for a bride), one cow to be taken to the bride's home and the other to be slaughtered on the wedding day. The cow that was taken to the bride's home would supply milk for the first-born baby and his mother, since the first child was customarily born at the mother's place of residence. "Cattle in sum, were the pliable symbolic vehicles through which men formed and reformed their world of social and spiritual relations" (Comaroff & Comaroff 1991:145). Cattle being inextricable from Batswana identity, the motif of dying cattle stands then as a further appeal albeit implicit to save his people from social and spiritual extinction. The 1913 Native Land Act was "the basis for the erosion and destruction of family and cultural life and the economy of Africans." (Asmal, 2007:xi).

Cattle are also evoked in *Native Life in South Africa*, in the context of an historical event, namely the asylum that Batswana Chief Moroka offered the Voortrekkers in the 1820s, after an encounter with the Matabele had robbed them of their cattle:

... [Moroka] levied from among his people gifts of milch cows and goats and also hides to make sandals and shoes for the tattered and footsore trekkers and their families, whom he settled in a place called Morokashoek. (B. Willan, Ed., in *Sol Plaatje. Selected writings*, 1996:409).

The gifts given, cattle and land, were most vital to the survival of these settlers who were also farmers by occupation. This particular image shows Batswana hospitality and generosity. Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) show, in historical perspective, how one-sided the hospitality and giving was between Europe and Africa. Whereas the earliest missionaries brought cheap novelties such as tobacco, combs, looking-glasses (mirrors) and beads as gifts, which in fact frequently belied the spiritual values they professed, Batswana chiefs typically brought meaningful gifts such as stock or oxen. (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991:183–184) The cow is a highly valued gift, signifying deep respect. Thus

Plaatje's evocation of this historical event demonstrates the deeply rooted Batswana cultural norm and value of giving and sharing. In *Mhudi*, a link between cattle and land is demonstrated.

3.4.3 Mhudi

This same historical event concerning Chief Moroka's hospitality is dramatized and fictionalized in *Mhudi*. In a scene where they are planning together to overthrow the Matabele, the Voortrekkers offer the Batswana the spoils of cattle if the Matabele are defeated, while the Voortrekkers keep the land (Plaatje, as cited in Couzens, T. (Ed.). 1996:chapter 19). The Batswana chief replies to the preposterous proposal: "what could one do with a number of cattle if he possessed no land on which to feed them? Will his cattle run on the clouds! And their grass grow in the air?" (ibid.:154). The question of cattle as it is thus framed in the novel is inextricably linked to the larger question of land. In black South African culture generally and Batswana culture in particular, cattle were primarily the domain of men, while fields and agriculture were the domain of women (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991:135). In the African and Batswana culture, land is associated with fertility and hence with woman, as in mother-earth nurturing and sustaining by providing food. Women are the providers and preparers of food for their families. Truthfully, the Native Land Act "has cut off the very roots of Native life by depriving us of nature's richest gift – our ancient occupation of breeding cattle and cultivating the soil."(Plaatje1982:254)

"To lose land was to lose the most important foundation upon which tribal life was built" (De Kiewiet as cited in Couzens1978:69). Tribal life depends on a continuity between the dead, the living, and the yet unborn. African attachment to the land is further related to the fact that the ancestors lie buried beneath their feet. Dislocation and being uprooted disrupts the ability to communicate with the ancestors. So sacred were cattle to the Batswana that it was normal, traditionally,

to bury the ancestors under the cattle kraal, so that their spirits might watch over and guard their most valuable asset. In certain black South African communities, on the first day of marriage, newly-weds slept in a temporary hut built of branches, next to the cattle kraal, in order to introduce the new wife to the ancestors and ask blessings on the marriage. In *Mhudi* the motif of cattle linked to land thus evokes the disruption of tribal life, which, we can infer, went to the very core, destroying the deep pride and self-respect of the Motswana

It is on the basis of the above assertion that Raditladi in his poem, Ntwa ya 1939-45 contends that land is property that no human being can claim to be his/hers exclusively. All human beings in the world found the land in existence when they were born. Nobody brought a piece of land from wherever they come from:

Ba re lefatshe leno ope ga a le sema
Banna ba Yuropa botlhe ba a le lema

They say no one created this world
All men of Europe plough it

The greed and occupation of land is a world-wide phenomenon and is a cause of conflict among nations.

Obviously, the cattle images in Raditladi's poetry a recount of Plaatje's ideologies, an attempt to emphasise what to Batswana is reverent, albeit symbolically in context.

2.5 Conclusion

Using an afrocentric approach has re-storied the African and Batswana sensibilities in Raditladi's poetry. Cattle form an integral part of the life of Motswana. Hence a forbearer said *wa e tlhoka, wa tlhoka boroko, wa nna nayo wa tlhoka boroko* meaning if you possess cattle, you are always nervous, they need to be looked after all the time. You worry about good pastures, drinking water and herdboys. It is said *modisa ga a nne tlhare se bothito* meaning the herdboy must always be alert. He must see to it that the cattle do not go into other people's gardens and feed on their plants.

A Motswana who has cattle is called *mohumi* (rich) and the one without cattle is called *mohumanegi* (poor). If you do not have cattle during the ploughing season, you do not know what to do. As cattle are part of everyday life a person who does not have cattle feels lost.

Cattle are significant to the Batswana to such an extent that even if they find a dead cow, they do not bury it but eat the meat. They say *lebitla la kgomo ke molomo* meaning the grave of a cow is the mouth. They also say *sebody ke sa molomo, sa nko se latsa le tlala* meaning a person should not smell the meat of a dead cow, people must enjoy meat and avoid hunger.

The tail of a cow is used as a *seditse* or whisk made of the hair of the tail. A cow is regarded as a tripod, *matshego* of Batswana. It is for this reason that a Motswana says *ga le ke le feta kgomo le tlhaba motho* [a spear will never pass a cow and pierce a person] meaning a person will never get into trouble if he has

cattle, he will take his cow and use it, to get out of trouble.

Cattle-raids in *The Mafikeng Diary* of Sol T. Plaatje, in particular, dignified Batswana heroism and a calm composed strength that rendered Africans skilful in covert operations. Dying cattle in *Native Life in South Africa*, in particular, signified the possible extinction of a people, as well as the possible destruction of their social and spiritual identities that were regulated through the ritual use of cattle. Cattle linked to land in *Mhudi* symbolised the disruption of tribal life, since they could no longer bury the ancestors under the kraal from where they were believed to watch over the tribe's wealth in cattle and well-being.

As regards outsiders visiting Africa, cattle and land remain the most useful and practical gifts. A Batswana cultural aesthetic entails the sacredness of cattle. In the African and Batswana context the everyday is sacred and the sacred is everyday; cattle supply a people's daily needs. The African aesthetic is functional. When re-storying a Batswana aesthetic, we might say that rhetoric restores the dignity and self-respect of the Batswana nation. "It is the culture which he inherits that gives a man his human dignity." (Jomo Kenyatta, cited in Mazrui & Tidy 1984:3)

CHAPTER 4

Kgama and Isang: The poem in the story

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the history and culture of the Batswana as portrayed by two outstanding Batswana leaders. The approach can be deduced from the central analytical construct, which is the social, cultural and historical environment of Batswana in Southern Africa.

White and Vail (1991) observe that when a large number of African countries achieved independence in the fifties and sixties, the field of anthropology, which had been focusing on kinship systems and individual “tribes”, was ill-equipped to explain the emergence of the nation state, and the discipline of history stepped in and came to the fore.

In recent decades, the two fields of inquiry have been converging, and according to White and Vail (1991:1) have come a long way in debunking the myth of an Africa inhabited by primitive, pre-rational, pre-industrial “oral” man, incapable of serious intellectual activity, a myth which they contend persists in the field of literacy criticism due to the oral/literate dichotomy.

The theoretical underpinnings of this chapter are drawn mainly from the postcolonial theory that include Homi Bhabha’s (1994), Edward Said’s (1993) and

Robert Young's (1995) articulations of hybridity, especially the project of renegotiating cultural identities at the moment of articulation and retrieving the unrepresented pasts that haunt the present. The appeal of the theory to this study specifically, is that it gives rhetorical agency to formerly disadvantaged and marginalized Batswana communities, allowing them to become subjects of their history and reformulate their distorted histories into the present.

The idea of a poem in the story originated from Harold Scheub (2002) in his collection and analysis of many African stories. Scheub has conducted some of the most interesting and provocative investigations into the non-verbal aspects of storytelling. In the blurb of his book, Scheub describes it as his most daring effort yet; an unconventional work that searches out what makes a story artistically engaging and emotionally evocative, the metaphorical centre that Scheub calls "the poem in the story". Drawing from an extensive fieldwork as a researcher and teacher, Scheub develops an original approach – a blend of field notes, diary entries, photographs, and texts of stories and poems – that guides readers into a new way of viewing, even experiencing, meaning in a story. He later published a book with the title, *A poem in the story* (Scheub, 2002).

In his analysis of Posholi (a brother of Sotho king Mošwešwe), Scheub describes a story as a composition of words, images, feelings, and rhythm, all of which conspire to create the metaphorical yeastiness that is a poem in the story. He then goes on to denote images as the raw material of the story. They are drawn from two sources, the contemporary world, which produces realistic images, and the ancient tradition from which fantasy mythic images are taken (2002:4).

A traditional African praise poem has characteristics of a story. The traditional poem is oral in nature, just like the story. It is performed by the bard, while the audience participates. In the story, the audience will sing, laugh and speak directly to the performer. In the poem, the audience will sing, ululate and dance while the performance is on.

The storyteller reveals realistic, mythic images, which evoke emotions from members of the audience; feelings of familiarity from contemporary images and a wide range of emotions from the ancient tradition.

Scheub also notes that when two kinds of imagery are united, a metaphor is created. This is the music in the story. Storytelling is ritual. The ultimate meaning of the story is essentially emotional; as the varied feelings of the members of the audience are worked into the new forms that, for the duration of the performance, have the added effect of welding the audience into a unity. The story becomes a ritualistic experience, the objective of which is to move the members of the audience into that metaphorical centre, which is the poem in the story (2002:4). The parallel is amazing, if not precise in its resemblance to Raditladi's poetic brilliance.

4.2 Kgama's story: *Kgomo e e maswi*

Kgama III (1837–1923), affectionately known as Kgama the Good, was the *kgosi* (chief or king) of the Bamangwato people of Bechuanaland (now Botswana). He is famous for making his country a protectorate of the United Kingdom to ensure its survival against Boer and Ndebele encroachments in 1885, as well as for being an outstanding chief and humanbeing. Kgama was full of the milk of human kindness for his people, and Raditladi implies that when Kgama died in 1923, all the goodness went with him to the grave. Truly, as the Setswana proverb says: "*E e mašwi ga e itsale*" meaning that the cow does not always beget a calf that emulates it. Sekgoma II, Kgama's eldest son from his marriage to Mma Bessie, became chief of the Bamangwato upon Kgama's death in 1923. Sekgoma II's eldest son was named Seretse. Throughout his life Kgama took several wives (each after the death of the former one). One of his wives, Semane, birthed a son

named Tshekedi. Sekgoma II's reign lasted only a year or so, leaving his infant son Seretse as the rightful heir to the chieftainship (Tshekedi was not in line to be chief since he did not descend from Kgama's oldest son Sekgoma II). So, in keeping with tradition, Tshekedi acted as regent of the tribe until Seretse was old enough to assume the chieftainship.

Kgosi Kgama's grandson, Seretse, like his grandfather, was a man full of the milk of human kindness. His life, as heir to Bamangwato, was filled with its own set of conflicts, familial (namely with Tshekedi), tribal, national and even international, but he is remembered for pioneering democracy among the Bangwato, breaking down tribalism and racism, leading his people through tumultuous times of continental transition to national liberation. (Mbanga & Mbanga, 2005). Seretse's "wise policies", "personal integrity" and leadership protected the country from corruption, which during this period in African history was rare. An amazing tribute lies in this his legacy "Between 1966 and 1980 Botswana had the fastest growing economy in the world" (Mbanga & Mbanga 2005:364). The story of Sir Seretse Kgama, grandson of Kgosi Kgama is included in chapter two where Raditladi's poem *Selelo sa morati* (A Lover's Lament) is discussed.

Kgama III, also known as Kgama the Great, is perhaps Botswana's most memorable chief. At a young age he made bold decisions governing how he would live his personal life in line with Christianity; decisions that brought him into conflict with his father and which would later transform tribal custom substantially and result in many of his people converting to Christianity. Kgama was a charismatic leader, to say the least. He is probably best remembered for having made crucial changes during his tenure as chief, namely abolishing *bogwera* (initiation rites) and polygamy, and banning alcohol in accordance with his newly-held Christian convictions and declaring his land a British Protectorate.

4.2.1 Origin of Bangwato and Ngwato royal family

Opinions differ about the origin of the Batswana. According to information found on the Internet, this is how it happened: "Sometime in the 18th century, Malope, chief of the Bakwena tribe, led his people from the Transvaal region of South Africa into the southeast territory of Botswana. Malope had three sons – Kwena, Ngwato, and Ngwaketse – each of whom would eventually break away from their father (as well as from each other) and form new tribes in neighboring territories. This type of familial break between father and sons (and then between sons) was historically how tribes proliferated throughout the southern African region. Splitting off and then reforming was not an uncommon occurrence among tribes" (Wikipedia).

According to the genealogical table of the Sotho-Tswana Royal Line found in (Setiloane, 1976:17), as well as information in Dutfield's novel (1990:11), Malope was chief of the Bakwena tribe, who led his people from the Transvaal region of South Africa into the southeast territory of Botswana. Malope had three sons – Mohurutshe, Mokwena, and Mokgatla. Mokwena had one son known as Phokotsi and Phokotsi had three sons, namely, Kgabo, Ngwato, and Ngwaketse – each of whom would eventually break away and form new tribes in neighboring territories

The researcher concurs with the information provided by Dutfield and Setiloane because it corresponds with earlier research by Prof. Thomas Tlou and earlier research by Dr David Livingstone. This type of familial break between father and sons was historically how tribes proliferated throughout the southern African region. Splitting off and then reforming was not an uncommon occurrence among tribes (Tlou & Campbell, 1985:112). In this particular instance, the break between Malope and sons was precipitated by a series of events – the death of Malope, Kwena's subsequent assumption of the Bakwena chieftainship (as the eldest son

of any African tribe customarily does), and ultimately, a dispute between Kwena and Ngwato over a lost cow. Shortly after the lost-cow incident, Ngwato and his followers secretly left Kwena's village under the cover of darkness and established a new village to the north. Ngwaketse similarly moved south (Wikimedia).

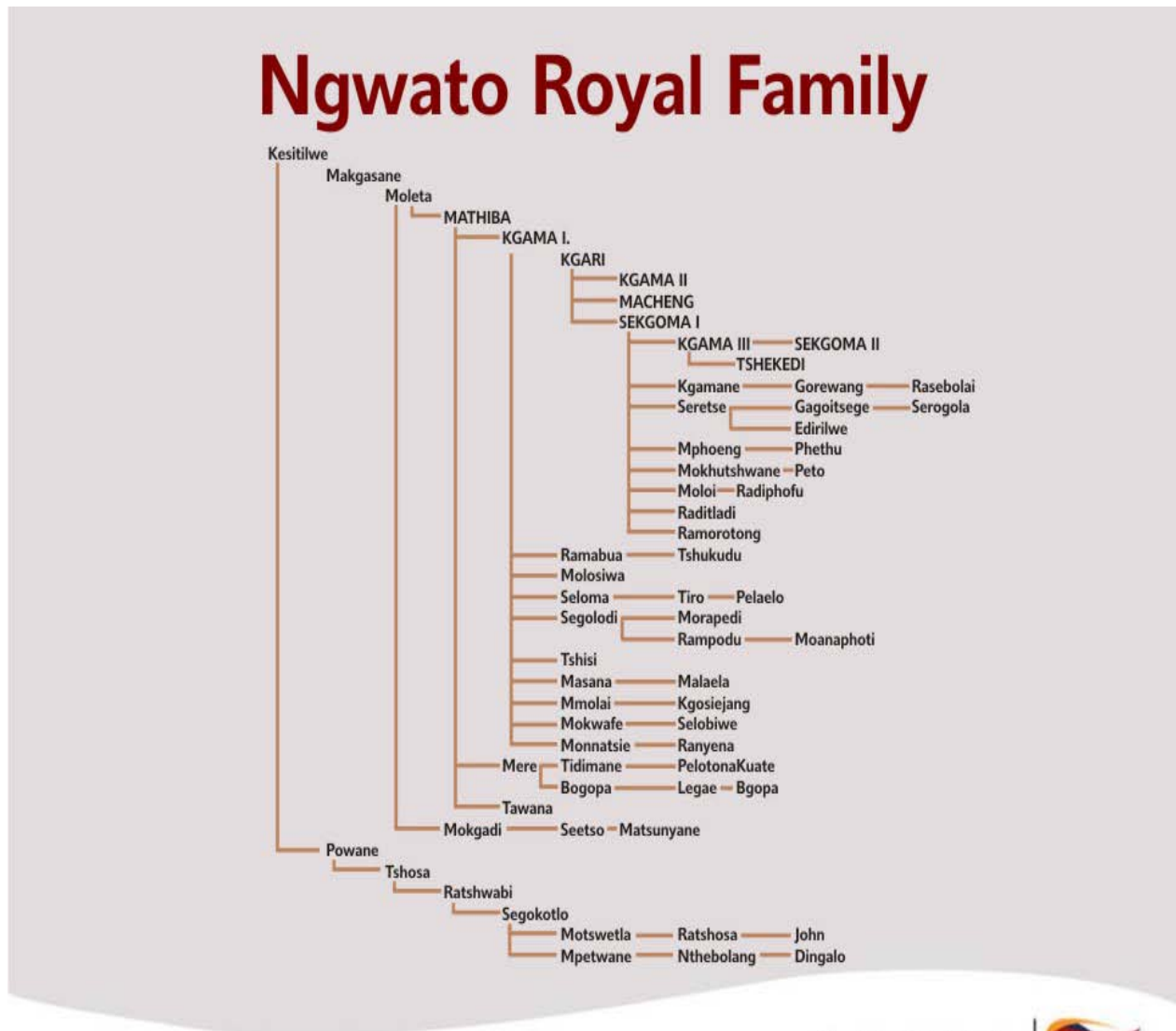
Unfortunately for Ngwato, out of Kwena's sight was not necessarily out of his mind. Kwena warriors attacked Ngwato's village three times, each time pushing Ngwato and his tribe of followers (now known as the Bamangwato) further northward. *Photi* (duiker) is the totem animal of the Bangwato. The legend goes that the mother of Ngwato had great difficulty in conceiving, and the chief had given her, as an ironic present, a strip of poor, gristly beef – in Setswana and Sengwato – a symbol of her barrenness (Dutfield, 1990:11). When, at last she did present a baby, she named him Ngwato, as a living reminder to her husband of his coldness (ibid). Following a quarrel between the three brothers, Ngwato was forced to run for his life. Hiding in the long grass, he watched his enemies approach. As they were almost upon him, a small deer – in Setswana, a *photi* – suddenly broke cover (ibid). As it was convinced that nobody could be hiding in the bushes if the photi had lain undisturbed until their arrival, his enemies moved off (ibid). When they had gone, Ngwato was able to rejoin his followers, and together they moved to the north and established their own territory, calling themselves the Bamangwato, meaning the people of Ngwato.

Somehow (this episode is not explained by Bessie), the Bamangwato held on, and by the time of Chief Kgama III's reign (between the years 1875–1923), the tribe had grown both through natural population increase and the influx of refugee tribes from South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to become the region's largest tribe (Wikimedia).

The *photi* which saved Ngwato from attackers by breaking cover therefore making the enemy think there was no one, is a significant symbol of the totem belief system. References to totemic relevance in the poetry of Raditladi are a feature that signifies his cultural oeuvre. They also show the significance of understanding Indigenous Knowledge System (IKS) reflected in literature. As literature depicts peoples's life, it also portrays their wisdom, ideals and philosophy.

The following is a representation of the Ngwato Royal Family. Its interpretation links up well with the antics in the poetry of Raditladi.

Figure 4.1



Source: Schapera1965:187

4.2.2 Analysis

Using the historical information presented in the previous paragraph Raditladi points a picture that starts with the birth of Kgama and how he became a king of the Bangwato. Stanzas two and three describe the wars between the Bangwato and Matabele. Stanzas four and five describe the conflict between Kgama and his father Sekgoma, which ultimately led to civil strife in the land of Bangwato. Stanza six touches on the achievements of Kgama III and his death in 1923. The last three stanzas are a eulogy, paying homage to one of the most outstanding leaders of the Batswana.

Stanza 1 Verse

1. *Kgakalagala gareng ga dikala*
 2. *Gona Kgama morwa-Sekgoma a belegwa,*
 3. *A tsena mo tharing ya tshepe e sa segwa*
 4. *Ka Matabele a ne a umakwa sebaka*
 5. *Sekgoma lefika a le baya senaga*
 6. *La gogomoga la feta dingologa*
 7. *La ritibala le lefatshe bogole*
- (Raditladi 1964:48).

Far far away in the middle of branches
 Where Kgama, son of Sekgoma, was born
 Installed himself with springbok hide
 For Ndebeles were invading his land
 Sekgoma planted a rock in the land
 It grew bigger than Dingologa
 It spread itself to faraway places

In the first stanza Raditladi creates a good milieu for the poem by providing the details of Kgama's life's historical reflection as discussed already, that is, Kgama is the firstborn child of Sekgoma I and therefore heir to the Bamangwato dynasty. Kgama is said to come from very, very far, that is, *Kgakalakgakala gareng ga dikala*. This may allude to the fact that because there was turmoil among the Bangwato, Kgama III's parents were in exile most of the time. According to Schapera (1965:191), when Kgari was killed by the Shona in 1828, his heir, Kgama II, was too young to succeed him. Sedimo, son of Kgari's brother, Molosiwa, therefore, acted as regent for a few years. During that time he cohabited as "seed raiser" with Kgama II's mother, who bore him a son named Macheng. Kgama II was in due course installed as *kgosi*, but died not long afterwards in 1834. His mother then took charge of tribal affairs, but with her surviving children was soon driven into exile by Sekgoma, Kgari's son by a junior wife. She went to live among the Kwenana, where in 1842, her son Macheng was captured by a raiding party of Matabele.[See the family tree figure 4.1]

Sekgoma was a capable and energetic chief, who reunited the various groups into which the Bangwato has been split after Kgari's death, but he was too severe to be popular, and at the beginning of 1858, he was replaced by Macheng whom Robert Moffat, first missionary to the Batswana, released from the Matabele. Macheng's despotic rule, based on the Matabele pattern, soon offended leading members of the tribe. Sekgoma, who had taken refuge with the Kwenana, was recalled, and easily succeeded in ousting him and becoming chief again in 1859. Sekgoma had two sons from his senior marriage, namely, Kgama III and Kgamane [See Figure 4.1].

When Raditladi says Kgama III comes from far-away, the implication may be he was born in the land of the Kwenana where his father resided during his banishment, *Gona Kgama morwa Sekgoma a belegelwa gona*. Raditladi uses metaphor to good effect here, *A tsena mo tharing ya tshepe e sa segwa* meaning Kgama III installed himself as chief after expelling his father. Kgama III became

kgosi during trying times. The skirmishes between Matabele and Bangwato had been taking place for many years. These two conflicts are expanded in the stanzas that follow. In 1844, Sekgoma deliberately killed a party of some twenty Matabele who had been sent to collect tribute from him (Schapera 1965:194). In 1863, after living with Sekgoma for several years, Kedikilwe fled back again to his native village in the Bokalaka area, and induced the Matabele to attack the Bangwato; the Matabele were repulsed and in revenge, killed Kedikilwe and the other men of his village (1961:196). The line *Ka Matebele a ne a umakwa sebaka* means that there was a rumour that the Ndebeles would strike at any moment. There was no love lost between these groups, as evidenced by a history of conflict.

Like the metaphor used in the poem *Isang a Lentšwe*, Raditladi uses the rock to symbolise the characteristics of Kgosi Kgama; the author describes the leader of the Bakgatla, Lentšwe, as a big rock. As already explained, a big rock in Setswana is known as *lefika*. He compares two objects, that is, a human being and a rock. He uses the characteristics of “the rock” to describe a human being. The implication we get from the first line is that, Kgama III, the traditional leader, is strong and hard, not easily split, unshakeable, not easy to penetrate and unassailable, just like Isang a Lentšwe of the Bakgatla. Unlike Isang a Lentšwe, who is compared with the big rock that is spreading itself all over Botswana, Kgama III is the rock that is bigger than Dingologa Hill. It is not only huge but softer also (meek character); it is the rock that brings calmness in the land.

4.2.2.1 Conflict with Matebele and general instability among Bangwato

Stanza 2 Verse

1. *Letsatasi lengwe ga tla leruuruu la ntwā*
2. *Leruuruu la thobane le melangwana*
3. *Ditlhobolo tsa dumaetsa makgabana*

4. *Pitse tsa sia ka sala di sa bantwa*
5. *Bapalami ba di ngaparela meetse*
6. *Kgosi Kgama ene a sala fela a ba emetse*
7. *Gore ba ba lalang ba fula ba fule*

Upon a time hostilities erupted

A jumble of sticks and knobkerries

Guns were rumbling in the hills

Horses ran with a saddle without reins

Riders clutching horses' manes

Kgosi Kgama was lying in wait [backing, supporting and fighting with his men]

For shooters to spend the night shooting

Stanza 3 Verse

1. *Letebele la sia le sa šeba la re:*
 2. *"A he jaana Kgosi Kgama ga ka mpone!*
 3. *A ruri kilamolelo ga ka mpone!"*
 4. *A motho wa sebetli Sekgoma,*
 5. *A betla a senke thupa tsa marukuru*
 6. *Tse di tshesane tsa phatsa tsa Seburu,*
 7. *Tse di molepha tsa ngwana wa bogosi*
- (Raditladi 1964:48)

A Ndebele running for cover saying:

I don't think Kgama sees me

Really the fire-hater doesn't see me

O what a prolific craftsman Sekgoma is

He carves very thin metal sheets
 As thin as those made by Boers
 The carvings that befits royal children

In the second stanza Raditladi is describing a real war scene. He is painting a clear picture of the events as they unfolded. He uses the onomatopoeic sound *leruuruu*, representing the sound made by the guns and the loudness it caused. Repetition of the word *leruuruu* in the second line emphasizes the damage caused by war. Raditladi employs linking when the last words of the first line are repeated in the first part of the second line:

Tsatsi lengwe ga tla leruuruu la ntwā
Leruuruu la thobane le melangwana

The weapons that were used give an indication that the war was taking place in Africa. The use of sticks and knobkerries at the time when Europeans were already using sophisticated weaponry creates an important milieu about Africa. Raditladi also mentions that on top of the noise that was made by sticks and knobkerries, there was also the sound of gunshots. It becomes clear that the war took place after the arrival of the whites in Africa who were selling guns to Africans. The traditional weapons of the Africans include spears, shields, axes, bows and arrows as well as sticks and knobkerries. The rumbling sound of guns represents an alien technology. It also symbolises the take over of land from its rightful owners to foreigners. There was a commotion as people were shot and fell from their horses. The horses were now running aimlessly without riders. This is a foreshadowing of the Bangwato, who later became disillusioned when the royal house was in shambles. When horses run with reins without riders, disorder is implied. Where there is no order, there is no hope. The war situation itself represents the confusion within the Bangwato dynasty and the Bangwato nation at large. The dynasty conflict is developed more specifically in the next stanzas,

but already the poet is depicting a state of general instability. It is very odd to see a father fighting against his son, brothers fighting against each other, and the uncles and aunts fanning the flames. Members of the royal family are expected to lead by example. According to African traditional culture, they have been destined to protect their subjects, to legislate, to execute laws and with the help of *kgotla*, to prosecute offenders. They have power and authority bestowed upon them by the ancestors. According to custom, they are custodians of law and order. As they have been chosen to rule they should be different from ordinary people. When there is infighting between the members of the royal family, it causes instability and doubt. When the leadership is fighting against each other, it creates a state of despair. The disarray and confusion Raditladi is painting in this stanza, represents the real situation of the society. War is difficult under any circumstances, but when the saddle of the horse is not fastened, it is impossible. Soldiers are struggling to balance on their horses: *ba ngaparetse dipitse ka meetse?* "How do you hold your spear or your gun when you are using both hands to clutch your horse's mane?" The situation is appalling, as fighters are fighting a losing battle. Kgama was waiting at the site of the war. He was not a spectator or a leader who gives instructions from a secure palace. He was leading by example.

In stanza three it becomes very clear that the war was between the Bangwato and Matabele. The phrase *Letebele la sia, la šeba la re:* suggests that the Ndebele soldiers were on the receiving end. It shows that they were running away, retreating, because they were losing the war. The use of the word *Letebele* also implies the negative attitude of the Batswana towards the Matabele. The correct word to be used is *Motebele* as the prefix /mo/ is used to designate people, not /le/ that designate objects in Setswana. It denotes their hatred towards a race that equally despised the Batswana. The Bangwato forces, marshalled by Kgama himself, were a fearful force. From historical fact as well as many novels written by the Batswana, such as *Mhudi*, the wars between the

groups were never ending. Sol Plaatje mentions in *Mhudi* that Batswana women were stunned by the huge Matabele soldiers who were always naked during the fight. The women were afraid that these soldiers would scare their children; the Matabele soldiers often marauded the Batswana villages, killing women and children in the process. This time around, they got more than they bargained for. The line *A he jaana Kgama ga a mpone* is wishful thinking. The Ndebele soldier is frightened, and admits that the only way to survive is if Kgama can lose sight of him. Kgama is also referred to as *Kilamolelo*. According to Schapera (1965:204), Kilamolelo is the lord who does not sit by the fire. This name was given to Kgama because at *Kgotla* he did not like to sit by the fireside. The words *A ruri Kilamolelo ga a mpone* were uttered out of fear and bewilderment. The Ndebele were shocked to witness the military prowess of Kgama. The line also appears in Kgama's praise poem attributed to Leetonyana Lekau of Bokotelo ward:

*...are, a jaana tau gaekantshware,
a fa gaakantshware Kilamolelo.*
(Schapera, 1965:204).

**and saying, "Won't the lion now seize me
won't fire-hater seize me here?"**

The above-mentioned line also symbolizes the tactics used in war. There is an African mythological belief about medicinal charms used during the war. It is said that just before the soldiers go to war, a traditional doctor is called to prepare them. Among the medicines that will be prepared, is a certain medicine that is a mixture of herbs and the tears of new born puppies. It is believed that baby puppies take a day or two before they can see objects with their naked eyes. During this period the traditional doctor may extract tears from puppies to mix them with muti. When witches go out at night, they smear this substance over them that makes them invisible. The soldiers too, use this medicine so that they

can be invisible to their enemies. When the Ndebele soldier declares that *A ruri Kilamolelo ga a mpone*, the implication might be that he has applied the medicinal charms and is hoping that the medicine is doing its wonders.

Raditladi continues to mention other qualities that Kgama was good at, besides his military prowess. It is very clear that Kgama was a prolific craftsman when looking at this line: *A motho wa sebetli Sekgoma*. He created artful utensils out of metal. He had ability to cut thin metal sheets like the Boers who had all the instruments. The carvings he created shows that he had a special talent as royal children have.

4.2.2.2 Kgama's conflict with his father: Sekgoma 1

Stanza 4 Verse

1. *Lehufa la kilo la ipala magale*
2. *La baya pelo ya Sekgoma mathata*
3. *La dira dikgang tsa motse makgamatha*
4. *Baitsegobua dipuo ba ipona botlhale,*
5. *Boteme ntlha bona ba ipaya lokoro*
6. *Ba tshelaganya gabedi, gararo*
7. *Maraganyi teng a bana ba dikgosi*

Perpetual jealousy became threatening
 Jealousy affected Sekgoma' heart
 It wreaked havoc all over the village
 Gossipmongers thought themselves wise
 Stirrers of strife egged them on
 Running from one place to the other
 Internal rivalry of the royal family

Stanza 5 Verse

1. *Jaana Sekgoma a bua a omana le Kgama*
2. *E rile ka moso bosigo bo sele*
3. *Phakela dikgomo di amusa marole*
4. *Kgama, mogale, a perepetsa Sekgoma*
5. *A mo thulega a leba kwa Sešabana,*
6. *A sala gae le mophato wa Bannana*
7. *Maretele, mareteleladitšhaba!*

(Raditladi 1964:48–49)

Now Sekgoma and Kgama were at each other's throat
 In the morning when the darkness was clear
 Very early when cows were suckling their calves
 Kgama, the hero, drove off Sekgoma
 Forcing him towards Sešabana
 Remaining at home with Bannana age-set
 The tough ones, who surpass other nations

In stanza four, Raditladi describes the infighting that occurred within the royal family. He suggests that the conflict resulted from petty jealousy among members of the royal family. *Lehufa la kilo la ipala magale*. *Lehufa* means jealous, *kilo* is hatred, go *ipala* is to express oneself and *magale* means edges of a blade of a knife or spear. Raditladi's choice of words exceeds one's imagination. He has selected his words carefully to create a good image. Jealousy within the family resulted in hate. Family members started accusing one another of plotting to kill them. A case in point is the conflict that affected Raditladi himself from the very same family. According to Morton and Ramsay (1987:97), Tshekedi accused his wife, Bagakgametse, and the three Raditladi brothers (Leetile, Lebang and

Disang) of bewitching his mother (Tshekedi's mother) Semane, and his sister Bonyerile. Again, no evidence was brought forward. Initially he accused Bagakgametse of being unfaithful to him. He later divorced Bagakgametse, alleging that she was in love with Raditladi. He also accused Raditladi of being the father to the new born child of Bagakgametse, as hinted at in the introduction.

The conflict in the Bangwato dynasty began long ago. In 1894, Kgama III quarrelled with his brother Raditladi (the author's father) over control of the London Missionary Society (LMS), and banished him to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Hence, *La baya Sekgoma mathata*. In 1938, Tshekedi did the same thing to Leetile and his two brothers. Tshekedi was convinced that his nephews were asserting themselves in an effort to challenge his rule. He banished them from Serowe and ordered them to settle in Francistown as indicated in the introduction.

This is how this jealousy was embedded in the hearts of family members. They expressed their hatred by hurting one-another. An individual could go to great lengths to hurt his kinsman. The situation within the family was frightening. It was as dangerous as edges of a blade of a knife or spear.

The blazing rift in the royal family attracted gossipmongers. People in the village started gossiping about the friction. *La dira dikgang tsa motse makgamatha*. It was no longer easy to distinguish truth from lies. *Makgamatha* means filthy, dirty or unpleasant. The news in the village was intended to humiliate the royal family. As the opportunity presented itself, people started exaggerating the situation and even fabricating lies. *Baitsedipuo ba ipona botlhale* means gossipmongers were spreading the news. Some were probably even entertaining the collapse of the Kgama dynasty. Stirrers of strife were going from some place to another, spreading unpleasant news.

Maraganyi teng a bana ba dikgosi comes from a Setswana proverb “*Maraganela teng a bana ba mpa ga a tsenwe*” meaning people should not interfere in the internal affairs of siblings. It is true that outsiders know very little about the real causes of conflict in a family. It is also advised that people should stay as far away as possible from the conflicts of siblings if they do not want to burn their fingers. A case in point is that of Sekgoma I after becoming chief again in 1859. During the next few years, Sekgoma quarrelled with his sons Kgama and Kgamanyane, who had converted to Christianity. Their refusal to observe certain traditional practices angered him greatly, and to spite them, he ultimately invited Macheng back from exile and surrendered the chieftainship to him in 1866. But Macheng favoured Kgama, and Sekgoma again was forced to flee to the south. Macheng’s second period of rule was no better than his first, and in 1872, he was finally expelled by Kgama with the help of the Kwena (Schapera, 1965:192). Macheng was both an insider and an outsider. He was a family member of the Kgama dynasty but his father was not heir to chieftainship. He only cohabited with Kgama II’s mother as a “seed raiser”. He burned his fingers by intervening in the affairs of Kgama and his children. He was expelled by Kgama, after helping him to drive Sekgoma out of Mmangwato.

In stanza five, Raditladi paints a picture of the civil war that occurred at Mmangwato when Sekgoma and Kgama were fighting against each other. The conflict included its share of intrigue – an attempted assassination of Kgama by Sekgoma; Kgama’s marriage to a Christian woman named Mma Bessie, and his subsequent refusal to take a second wife according to the custom of polygamy; Kgama’s withstanding of Sekgoma’s sorcery; Kgama’s forced exile with the tribe’s Christian followers into the hills surrounding the village of Shoshong; and finally Kgama’s return to Shoshong after Sekgoma’s second botched assassination attempt and the concomitant installing of Sekgoma’s brother, Macheng, as the new chief of the beleaguered tribe (Sekgoma headed into exile).

Raditladi seems to have borrowed the images of his poem from the praise poem of Sekgoma:

*Tau esala eomana letlou;
erile boosa yaperepetsa tlou,
yaethulega yaleba Sešabane,
kwamaropeng agaRramokopole;*

**A lion quarrelled at night with an elephant
at daybreak it drove off the elephant,
forcing it towards Sešabane,
to the ruins of Ramokopole
(Schapera, 1965:204).**

According to Schapera, quoting Leetonyane Lekau of Bokotelo ward, this praise is said to have been composed after Kgama's expulsion of Macheng in 1872. Raditladi uses the same images to express the same feeling when Kgama expelled Sekgoma from Mmangwato.

*Kgama, mogale, a perepetsa Sekgoma
A mo thulega a leba kwa Sešabana,
(Schapera, 1965:204)*

**Kgama, the hero, drove off Sekgoma
Forcing him to go to Sešabana**

Earlier, Kgama recalled his father back home after expelling Macheng. Father and son then quarrelled again, and Kgama withdrew his many followers, first to Serowe and then to the Botletle River. This time Kgama did not want to commit

the same mistake. He remained with his age-set Bannana and his nation became a powerful force that defeated many nations.

4.2.2.3 Kgama's social reforms: contrast between Kgama and Tshekedi

Stanza 6 Verse

1. *Setšhaba Kgama o se diretse mabogo*

2. *Gore kakeng sa botshelo se iphedise*

3. *Le motse wa sone se ke se o godise*

4. *O gole le leina la Modimo mmogo*

5. *O ne a se lehufa le remang marwana*

6. *O ka bo a le amule dithobeng, morena*

person like a number of other members of the Kgama family]

7. *Ija, ga re a sengwa ke Naintin twenti teril*

(Raditladi 1964:49).

Kgama has done everything for his nation

So that they can survive in the dessert

And also grow their village

Let he be praised in the name of God

He was not jealous of anyone

He could have sucked it from the breast

[He could have become a jealous

Oh, things went wrong in nineteen twenty three!

In the sixth stanza, Raditladi looks at the achievements attained by Kgama. The line *Setšhaba Kgama o se diretse mabogo* means that Kgama has achieved a great deal during his chieftainship. He installed discipline and encouraged his followers to be prudent in handling their own affairs. He taught his followers

survival skills. Botswana is situated in the Kalahari Desert region where the rainfall is unpredictable and farming unreliable. Irrespective of the challenges posed by natural conditions, Kgama introduced economic reforms that sustained his land. The line, *Gore kakeng tsa botshelo o ipheditse* suggests that he introduced successful reforms that boosted the economic development. The reforms injected growth and development at Mangwato.

Although Kgama had abolished the traditional *bogwera* ceremony itself, he retained the *mephato* regiments as a source of free labour to build missionary schools and churches. The scope of a *mephato's* work responsibilities would later expand considerably under the rule of Kgama's son, Tshekedi, into the building of primary schools, grain silos, water reticulation systems, and even a college named Moeng, located on the outskirts of Serowe, which under Kgama's reign, had become the Bamangwato capital. In concert with the *mephato*, Kgama introduced a host of European technological improvements in Bamangwato territory, including the *mogoma* or oxen-drawn moldboard plow (in place of the hand hoe) and wagons for transport (in place of sledges).

Raditladi continues singing the praises of Kgama. He wishes that Kgama receives the blessings he deserves. He also suggests that, as a man of God, he practices Christian principles of fairness and honesty. In his early twenties, Kgama was baptized into the Lutheran Church via the LMS along with five of his younger brothers. The brothers were some of the first members of the tribe to take this step; a step that would soon be joined by a fairly large percentage of Kgama's followers. It was no small step for Kgama. By this time he had already gone through *bogwera* (the tribe's traditional initiation ceremony into manhood) with members of his *mephato* (age regiment). Historically, *bogwera* entailed rigorous endurance tests, which included circumcision. The ceremony culminated in the ritual slaying of one of the *mephato* members, as a kind of purification rite.

Initially, Kgama's father, Chief Sekgoma I, grudgingly accepted his son's affiliation with the church, although he did not embrace the church doctrine himself. Eventually, their divergent beliefs and values brought Sekgoma and Kgama into open conflict. Perhaps Kgama's conversion was too much of an 'in-your-face' kind of change for Sekgoma to accept. At the time, the tribe was based in the village of Shoshong, which is located near present-day Mahalapye.

Raditladi praises Kgama for his character. Even after fighting fiercely with his father, Kgama had a heart to forgive. When his enemies came back home claiming that they had repented they were always given a second chance. (Schapera, 1965:201) also notes that although Kgama's personal integrity was unquestioned, he was very autocratic and firmly insistent on his rights as chief. This caused him to quarrel with several of his other relatives, whom he banished, but who were subsequently allowed to return. He is, however, said to have been a good judge, and extremely generous to his people; he also did much to improve the social status of the Masarwa and other Seville classes. Kgama III was steadfast in imposing his Christianized will on the tribe. He banned alcohol from tribal lands (with varying success), put moratoriums on the sale of cattle outside the Bamangwato territory and tribal land, as concessions to foreign mining and cattle interests, and abolished polygamy. The abolition of polygamy was perhaps his most controversial move. Some argue that as Christianity later spread among the other tribes of the protectorate and polygamy was universally abolished, the societal 'glue' that kept families together (extended as they were through polygamy) dried up.

Raditladi also implies that Kgama was not a vengeful person and did not harbour petty jealousies. He was not threatened by people's achievements. While this poem is about Kgama, one gets the impression that he is being compared with Tshekedi Kgama, whom Raditladi thinks was the direct opposite of Kgama III. Raditladi had every reason to believe that Tshekedi had a hidden agenda.

Morton and Ramsay report that Simon Ratshosa was born into Bamangwato royalty. He was the son of Besi, eldest daughter of the primary house, *first lapa* of Kgama III. He was one of the first Batswana to be educated at the Lovedale College, in the Eastern Cape. His father, Ratshosa, was Kgama III's personal secretary and kept the famous Chief's government correspondence and all private papers. When Ratshosa died, his eldest son and Simon's senior brother, Jonnie Ratshosa, took over his duties and remained Kgosi's secretary after the death of Kgama in 1923. Jonnie served Sekgoma II until the chief died suddenly in 1925.

When Tsheledi became regent, Jonnie and his brothers were removed from power. Tsheledi arrived at Serowe from school to find that a council of twelve had been chosen by the royal uncles to govern until Tsheledi was formally installed. The council, which included Jonnie and Simon, naturally expected to assist Tsheledi after he was installed. However, as soon as Tsheledi formally became regent in 1926, he dissolved the council because he distrusted the Ratshosa brothers, Jonnie and Simon, who he believed that the council was important. This was the start of the struggle for power (1987:24).

Raditladi's assertion seems to be true. Although the Ratshosa brothers were Tsheledi's nephews, they were removed from office without any recourse even though they had served Tsheledi's predecessors with distinction. Some members of the royal family lost their privileges without any reasons given. Therefore the line *O ne a se na lehufa le remang marwana* has an analogous meaning. From the Setswana proverb that says: *E e mašwi ga e itsale* "the cow that produces much milk does not always beget a calf that will produce much milk". According to Raditladi, Kgama was *kgomo e e mašwi* but unfortunately it did not beget the calf to emulate it. As eluded earlier, Kgama, was full of the milk of human kindness for his people. In 1923, when Kgama died, all the goodness went with him to the grave.

Tshekedi is best remembered for three things during his reign as acting chief of the Bamangwato – his expansion of the mephato regiments for the building of primary schools, grain silos, and water reticulation systems; his frequent confrontations with the British colonial authorities over the administration of justice in Ngwato country; and his efforts to deal with a major split in the tribe after Seretse married a white woman named Ruth while studying law in Britain. While they reveal that the Bamangwato clearly preferred the real heir, Seretse, as their leader, Tshekedi is credited for later working together with his nephew, Seretse, to create the framework and lay the foundations for the democratic institutions that would lead the Bamangwato to progress and develop (Mbanga & Mbang 2005: 312–313;320) The inference might be that exile changed Tshekedi, softening and maturing him. One cannot but also be impressed that it was the character of Seretse, who like his grandfather, did not hold grudges, but was a forgiving man whose very presence was often sufficient to diffuse potentially conflictual or inflammatory situations. In all his dealings with the British, who persecuted him for the sake of diplomatic and strategic relations with South Africa, the officialdom never ceased to be amazed at and in awe of his gentlemanly manners and conduct. Despite the personal pain caused by his uncle's rejection of his white wife, he never wavered in his respect for this older man who had raised him. He did everything to rebuild the friendship with his uncle. Just before his death, Tshekedi admitted to his nephew "there's no such thing as race, you know" (Mbanga & Mbanga 2005:340).

4.2.2.4 Eulogy for Kgama a chief among chiefs

Stanza 7 Verse

1. *Ga o na le mmala ngwana wa Sekgoma*
2. *Sebola se fa kae Morena wa Setšhaba?*
3. *O tshwana fela jaaka metsi a sediba*
4. *O itshekile ga o na bokeleko Kgama*
5. *Kgosi wena le Mošwešwe lo a lekana*
6. *Lo tlerebetsa mantšwe fa lo kopana*
7. *Lo lela lo ranelana letsibogo*

(Raditladi 1964:49).

You are a fair-minded child of Sekgoma

Where can we find fault Leader of the Nation?

You are like water from the well

You are clear and have no blemishes

Kgosi you and Mošwešwe are equal

You speak highly of each other when together

You weep when you meet in the ford [Place where one crosses a stream/crucial point where a decision must be made]

In stanza 7, Raditladi continues paying tribute to the honourable leader of Bangwato. The image evoked in this line *Ga o na le mmala ngwana wa Sekgoma* expresses an opinion of level headedness. This is the person who does not discriminate between people according to rank or file. The image conjured in the reader's mind is that he is colour blind, which means all people are equal before his eyes. The line, *Sebola se kae morena wa setšhaba* demonstrates Kgama's perfect nature. Raditladi examines Kgama's character, but fails to notice any faults. He equates Kgama to *metsi a sediba*. He is a symbol of calmness,

pureness, quietness, cleanliness and life. In some African cultures *bodiba* symbolises fertility and reproduction. When a pregnant woman goes for accouchement leave, it is said *o ya bodibeng* to get a baby. *Bodiba* is associated with holiness. The symbol of a child in the womb full of liquid is like a pool of water. Here Raditladi employs imagery to point out Kgama's significance. Kgama is like still water, he is calm and gentle, he is kind and humane. *O itshekile ga a na bokeleko* means that he is like clean water which is transparent, you can see through it. As is known, muddy water may harbour dangerous reptiles which are not visible. Raditladi equates Kgama to one of the greatest African leaders, King Mošwešwe of Basotho.

According to the Columbia Encyclopedia, Moshoeshoe or Moshweshwe (1786–1870) was a Sotho king who, being a remarkable leader and superior military tactician, was able to unite several small groups into the Sotho nation. By the mid-1820s he ruled approximately 25,000 citizens. He permitted Christian missions and sought British aid against Afrikaner pressure from the Orange Free State (now Free State). After the Afrikaner attack in 1865, he won protectorate status from Britain in 1868, maintaining the autonomy of the 125,000 Sotho. Moshoeshoe is considered the founding father of modern Lesotho (Author unknown, *MOSHOESHOE.*, The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition 2008).

Raditladi reiterates Kgama's stature by equating him to Mošwešwe. The comparison helps to visualize the important role played by Kgama. *Lo lela lo rakanela lotsibogo* implies that the two statesmen shared a common vision, for example, Kgama spearheaded the move to declare Bechuanaland a British Protectorate to safeguard it against the Boer Republic who wanted to annex it. He even led a deputation of Batswana chiefs to Britain to lobby the support of the queen. After overthrowing his father, Sekgoma, and elbowing away his brother, Kgamane, Kgama became king in 1875 at time of great danger and

opportunities. He had to contend with Ndebele incursions from the north (now Zimbabwe), Boer "mixed" trekkers from the south, and German colonialists from the west, all hoping to seize his territory and its hinterlands. He answered these challenges by aligning his state with the administrative aims of the British that provided him with cover and support, and, relatedly, by energetically expanding his own control over a much wider area than any *kgosi* before him. Kgama converted to Christianity, which moved him to criminalize sectarianism and deprecate the institutions favoured by traditionalists. At Kgama's request, stringent laws were passed against the importation of alcohol.

The British government was of two minds as to what to do with the territory. One faction, supported by a local missionary named John Mackenzie, advocated the establishment of a protectorate, while another faction, headed by Cecil John Rhodes, adopted an imperialist stance and demanded that the country be opened up to white settlement and economic exploitation. The resolution came in 1885, when the territory south of the Molopo River became the colony of British Bechuanaland, while the territory north of the river became the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The colony was eventually incorporated into Britain's Cape Colony and is now part of South Africa.

Rhodes continued his campaign to pressure the British government to annex what remained of Kgama's territory. In 1895, with two chiefs from neighboring tribes, Kgama travelled to Britain in 1895 to petition the Queen of England for protection from the dual pressures of Cecil Rhodes's British South African Company – located in what was later to become Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) to the north – and the Afrikaner settlers creeping up from the south. His efforts were eventually successful and the Bechuanaland Protectorate, which was later to become the independent nation of Botswana in 1966 under the leadership of Kgama's grandson Seretse Kgama, was established. The colonial administration conceded after the ill-fated "Jameson raid" of 1896. Had Kgama been unable to

convince the British authorities of the need to protect the Bamangwato, it is very likely that much of what is today Botswana would have been absorbed into Rhodesia and South Africa.

Mošwešwe also left a legacy that will stay with the Basotho people until the end of time. Like Kgama, Mošwešwe also won protectorate status from Britain in 1868. King Letsie of Basotho, in Lesotho, is also a direct descendant of Mošwešwe.

4.2.2.5 A Christian among Christians

Stanza 8 Verse

1. *Legodimo lo ka bo ruri le le gaufi*
2. *Ke kabo ke agela Kgosi Kgama ntlwana*
3. *Ke re, ntlwana ya gago e gone, morena*
4. *Mogope o gone gorogela morafe*
5. *Selepe se seleele morwa Sekgoma;*
6. *Wena Kgokong diphalleng wa ga Rakgama*
7. *Tobeletobele yo mogolo baneng.*

(Raditladi 1964:49).

I wish the heavens were nearer
 I was going to build a sanctuary for Kgama
 And say, your home is in heaven, my lord
 There is plenty food for everyone
 Very long axe son of Sekgoma
 A wildebeest among impalas
 A giant figure among the children

In stanza eight, Raditladi makes his wish. As the English saying goes "if wishes were horses beggars would ride", Raditladi is making his wish vividly clear. He wishes the heavens were near so that he could build a house for Kgama.

Raditladi wishes to bestow honour on Kgama by building a sanctuary for him in heaven. Here Raditladi elevates Kgama's dignity and integrity to the highest level. As Kgama himself was a Christian, Raditladi imaged Kgama within the Christian domain. He is a colossal figure to be compared only to the very best. Only three individuals in the Christian Bible, **Enoch**, **Elijah** and **Jesus Christ**, joined the angels and the arch-angels in heaven because of their contribution on earth.

When Enoch was 65, he had a son, Methuselah. After that, Enoch lived in fellowship with God for 300 years and had other children. He lived to be 365 years old. He spent his life in fellowship with God, and then disappeared because God took him (Genesis, Chapter 5, Verses 21–23)

Elijah also ascended into heaven:

Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!' So he saw him no more. And he took hold of his own clothes and tore them into two pieces. He also took up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and went back and stood by the bank of the Jordan (2 Kings, Chapter 2, Verses 11–13)

Jesus Christ, in the New Testament, was the last person to go to heaven:

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven' (Acts 1, Chapter 9, Verses 9–11).

Raditladi, in his poem *Kgosi Kgama*, may have borrowed the extract from M.S. Kitchen's text. Kitchen's text is an earlier publication as shown above. Kitchen's text looks at heaven as holy and untouchable; as a place that cannot be reached. The only way of communicating with God is to give him a call. Raditladi's text has extended the meaning of the significance of *legodimo*; it is not just a place exclusively reserved for God, but that other high achievers can reside with God as angels and arch-angels. That people like Kgama, deserve to live in heaven.

Raditladi describes Kgama as tall and elegant. *Selepe se seleele morwa Sekgoma*, a very useful tool of Motswana. The Bakwena, a group from which the Bangwato descended, uses axes and shields in war. *Selepe sa magagana* is the most reliable instrument to drive the enemies away. *Selepe* is also used to chop fire-wood, to trim trees and break big bones after slaughtering animals.

Leseyane notes the significance of *selepe* in Setswana culture in this way:

Mosimane wa monyadi, o laiwa ka go itsisiwa se o tshwanetseng go nna sona mo bagwagwading ba gagwe ka go newa selepe. O newa selepe se ka go tewa go twe, 'ka selepe se o tshwanetse go itaya kgofati, wa e isa bogwe.' 'Molao o ke o mongwe wa melao e e sa fetogeng mo botshelong ba Batswana.' Fa mokgwenyana a ise a iteye kgofati a e isa kwa bogwe, ga a ise a wetse nngwe

ya ditiro tse dikgolo tse bagwagadi ba gagwe ba di lebeleletseng mo go ene. Le gona ga ba kitla ba lebala go mo gakolola tshwanelo ya gagwe ka go mmotsa gore kgofati e tla tla leng (1963:158).

The bridegroom is given an axe and instructed, by being told about the task he has to perform for his in-laws. The axe is presented following this instruction, "with this axe you are expected to chop baste (used for binding or weaving), and take it to your in-laws". This is one tradition that does not change in the life of the Batswana. If the son-in-law has not chopped baste yet and takes it to his in-laws, he has not yet completed some of his important duties expected of him. They will never forget to remind him about his duty by asking when will he bring baste.

Selepe se seleele is very special, as it is only used where the small one fails. Here Raditladi refers to Kgama's usefulness because *selepe* is one of the most utility instruments in the house. By comparing Kgama with the axe, Raditladi highlights his precision, sharpness and decisiveness.

The image of tall and elegant leaders (*dikgosi*) is also prevalent in other Setswana works of art. The Batswana believe that their leaders were anointed by *badimo* to care and lead their followers. A Setswana novel written by D.P.S. Monyaise has the title, *Bogosi Kupe*, *bogosi* is sacred. *Bogosi* is a gift from *badimo* and anybody who challenges this institution or wishes to usurp *bogosi* will be doomed. As a result, their makeup is different from that of ordinary people. Monyaise says:

Mme fa kgosi e tlhotsa e se bone malata molato fa a gogoba; gone tsela ka gale re e botsa mo go ba ba itseng (1974: 66)

And when kgosi is limping he should not blame his servants when crawling on their stomach because we always ask advice from knowledgeable people

Physical features, as indicated by Raditladi, are a distinguishing factor between the royal and common people. Monyaise adds to this by saying:

...mosetsana wa dinyaga tse di masomepedi le metso; a le moleele, wa go ka bo a tsetse kgosi; ditlhaa di tshologile, motho yo motshwana wa maratagolejwa:
(1961:9)

...a girl of about twenty something years; she was tall, suitable to be a kgosi's mother; with beautiful cheeks, a beautiful light complexioned girl.

From Raditladi's description, it is clear that Kgama's physical appearance was different from that of ordinary people. By referring to Kgama as *Kgokong* among the springboks, is a clear indication that he was visible to everybody. *Kgokong* is a big, strong animal while springbuck are small, thin animals. To extend this metaphor, he also refers to him as *Tobeletobele yo mogolo baneng*. It is easy to distinguish a giant among small children. His physique was that of a leader. He was visible from far away. Even visitors who came to the village for the first time would not ask who Kgama was. He distinguished himself by his physique. As a person who was destined to lead and be followed, he was in Monyaise' words:

"moleele, a le matsatsarapa, e le Moaforika wa tsopa la maloba" (1976:12)

Tall and slender, a real African of yesteryears

"...mosimane yo magodimo a ntshitseng maatlametlo, botswerere, manontlhotlho le matsetseleko a one otlhe fa a mmopa, gore popo e gomotsege e itumele
(1976:12)

“...the creator showed skill, art, dexterity and circumspection when creating this boy”.

4.2.2.6 An ancestor among ancestors

Stanza 9 Verse

1. *Nkabo ke le mmoki nkabo ke akola*
2. *Ke na le loleme ka mo tsetseleka*
3. *Ka re, kgorogo e ntsho e maoto a diphaka*
4. *Dinao tsa tshwanela go leleka phala*
5. *Dinaonyana tsa ga Seloma wa Kgama*
6. *Diatla mogopo wa go jela dinama*
7. *Ereke tsa Kgosi Kilamolelo*

(Raditladi 1964:49);

If I were a poet, I would enumerate
 With a tongue to sing his praises
 That he is the black hornbill with huge legs
 With feet strong to chase an impala
 His feet are like Seloma Kgama's
 His hands like a serving dish [referring to his generosity and magnanimity]
 Like hands of Kgosi who loath fireplace

Again, as in *Isang Lentšwe*, Raditladi ends his poem with a eulogy. He is paying tribute to a successful leader. Raditladi seem to lack the appropriate words to describe the impeccable and gifted leader of the Bangwato. He compares Kgama with his ancestors, thereby elevating him to that position. Emanuel Ngara observes that:

The poet must be aware of his ancestors, of his tradition: he must incorporate the achievements of his predecessors in his own works but be aware of his own time and place so that his work reflects a consciousness of both his own time, his own culture, and that of his own ancestors (Scheub 2002:44).

4.3 Isang's story: 'lentswe legolo'

Figure 4.2



Kutlwano Magazine February 2000

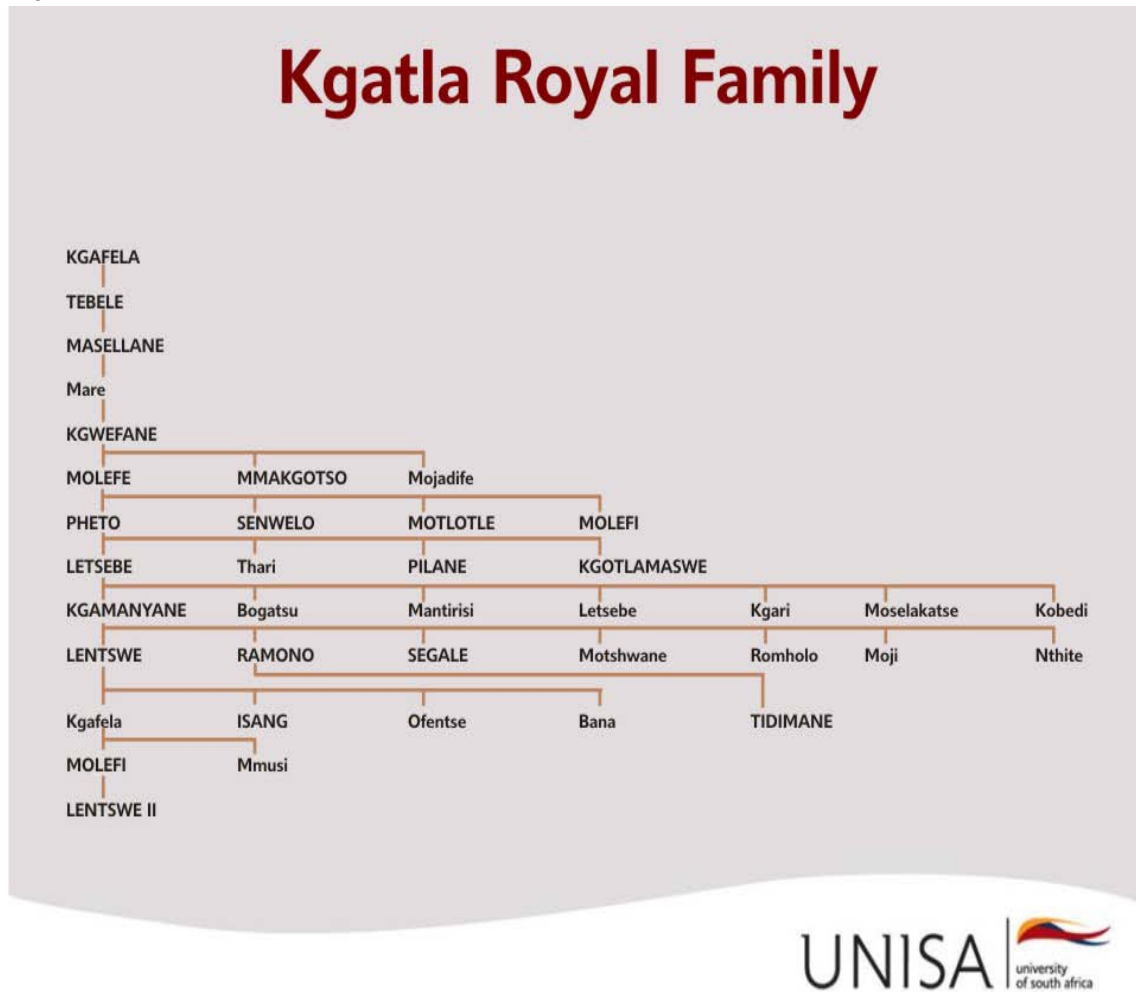
4.3.1 Early life of Isang a lentswe and Bakgatla family tree

Isang (1884–1941) was the second son in the great house of Lentšwe Pilane chief of the Bakgatla ba Kgafela in Botswana . Isang was a man of many strong qualities; a man of vision. He is remembered as a powerful chief and gifted speaker with boundless energy. Isang and his elder brother, Kgafela were educated in Setswana and English by Thomas Phiri, an early Mokgatla evangelist working for the Dutch Reformed Church in Sikwane. Later, the two boys were sent to an Anglican School, Zonnabloem College, in Cape Town.

Kgafela, who was heir to the Bakgatla dynasty, died while his father was still the chief. He had two sons, Molefi and Mmusi. In 1921, Lentšwe died. Molefi was still too young to take over as chief. Isang, his uncle, was sworn in to serve as a regent until his nephew, who was only eleven years old, was ready to take over. Once in power, he wasted no time in acting like a true *kgosi*. He was appointed as leader of all the *dikgosi* (chiefs) of the southern *merafe* (tribes).

In 1929 Molefi, who was only twenty years old, was installed as chief of the Bakgatla. In 1932, mutual hatred between Molefi and Isang nearly erupted into violence at a huge *letsholo* . The government intervened to restore order, and in 1934 they held an inquiry to terminate the conflict. Isang was found guilty of disrespect towards Molefi and trying to undermine his authority. He was fined heavily and banished from Motšhodi to Mošomane.

Figure 4.3



Source: 1965:44

4.3.2 Analysis

The entire poem is divided into three phases. The first phase, which is represented by the first stanza, introduces Isang a Lentšwe. It informs the audience about his origin. That he is the son of the chief and has characteristics that he inherited from his father and forefathers. It describes the qualities of Isang as a member of the Lentšwe family and alludes to the history of the tribe, the wars they fought until they deservedly attained their praise name "A big rock spreading over Botswana". The praise name of the tribe suggests that they were

attacked many times, but managed to protect themselves. Their attackers ended up losing “fingers” and “nails” in the process. In other words, they were a force to be reckoned with.

The second phase, consisting of the second and third stanzas, concentrates mainly on the achievements of Isang a Lentšwe that made Motšhodi a centre of enlightenment. The chiefs from the various communities in Botswana came to Motšhodi to learn about new developments. The second phase also touches on improvements in the education sector.

The third phase consists of the last two stanzas and is a eulogy. First Isang is remembered in exile in Mošomane and compared to a cow. Isang served his people well. His predecessor was not dedicated to his course as a leader. There was no progress in any sphere, and the progress achieved previously by the Bakgatla was dwindling. The poet’s words represent the outcry of the Bakgatla at the time. As indicated in the short history of Isang, Bakgatla depended on him. He paid their children’s school fees; encouraged boys and girls to go to school and the Bakgatla to save money; and introduced progressive systems of agriculture. Therefore, the poet feels that “the cow” must come back from exile to feed the women and children.

4.3.2.1 Leadership skills

Stanza 1 Verse

1. *Lentswe legolo le namile Botswana*
2. *Bafudi ba lona ba fela dinale*
3. *Baleki ba lona ba latlha menwana*
4. *Ba robega masufu ba sa ikaelela*
5. *Bokete jwa lona bo utlwala Motšhodi*
6. *Nko ya lone e palela balefudi*

(Raditladi, 1964:53).

**A Colossal rock spreading over Botswana
 Its attackers' nails are vanishing
 Its contenders are losing fingers
 Breaking their arm-bones unintentionally
 Its weight is felt in Motšhodi
 A target that surpasses its attackers**

The poet describes the leader of the Bakgatla, Lentšwe, as a big rock. The poem is a sustained allusion to the praises of his forebears, Masellane and Lentšwe Pilane I. While Masellane is referred to in the first stanza, Lentšwe Pilane I is referred to in the last stanza. Compare line one with:

*Masellane letlapa leikadi,
 Lesale le ikala kwa badimong*

**Masellane is a self-spreading rock
 Spreading itself out from the beginning of time
 (Schapera 1965:45).**

A big rock in Setswana is known as *lentšwe*. He uses two words that have the same sound but different meanings. He compares a human being with a rock and uses the characteristics of “the rock” to describe a human being. The implication from the first line is that, Lentšwe, the traditional leader, is strong, hard, not easily split, unshakeable, not easy to penetrate and unassailable. This big rock is spreading itself all over Botswana. It is not only confined to Bakgatland, where it originates. This implies that the influence of Lentšwe goes far beyond the borders of his kingdom. The word *bafudi* literally means shooters/attackers. *Go fula ka tlhobolo* means to shoot with a gun using bullets. Symbolically, the poet

means people tried to water down Lentšwe's plans, but he stood firm. They tried to sabotage his strategies, but he was unshakeable. He does not easily shift from his standpoint. Many people tried to challenge him, but he was strong. People criticised most of his projects, but he never gave up. Instead, in the end, it was the critics who were defeated. *Go fela dinala* means engaging in a losing battle. It means striving for something that is unattainable or simply wasting time. The idea is further extended in the third line, *Baleki ba lona ba fela menwana* meaning people who try to oppose Lentšwe end up losing. The contenders are people who angrily try to stop Isang from doing his work. They may also be people who refuse to participate in the meetings of males at the tribal assembly, *matsholo*, as indicated in the story, or people who refuse to pay tax for an intended project. These people were severely punished, hence the poet says *ba latlha menwana*, which shows how serious the omission was. While the first group was only losing their nails, the second lost fingers. The act is more painful and the effect is more serious, because they would not be able to handle objects or work with their hands anymore. In the process, they also broke the bones in their arms. It is very difficult to be useful if you do not have hands. Challenging Isang's decisions is like rendering yourself useless.

This is not because he is a dictator who does not like opposition, but because it glorifies the projects he undertakes. His main objective is to build a community that can sustain itself. The poet goes on to say *bokete jwa lona bo utlwala Motšhodi* meaning people at the capital of Bakgatlaland are the ones to bear the brunt. As people who live in the capital, they must lead by example. Isang lives in the capital and he monitors the work himself. He is able to see those who are participating and those who do not. As a disciplinarian he did not spare the rod because he believed people wanted a strong leader. As a result, those who lived in Motšhodi had to serve as a shining example to the rest of the tribe. *Nko ya lona e palela balefudi* means he was always ahead of his critics. His attackers or cynics always wanted to find fault in what he was doing, but were unable to

expose his faults. His leadership evidenced itself in a pragmatic vision, in ambitious socio-economic projects and innovations, a dogged insistence on education, in strict discipline, hardwork and an emphasis on community service or self-help.

4.3.2.2 Leadership skills: social and economic changes

Stanza 2 Verse

1. *Le baepadidiba botlhe ba a le rata*
 2. *Ke motswedi wa metse a tswang lenageng*
 3. *Le baagi ba matlo botlhe ba a le rata*
 4. *Ke kgolo ya ntšwetshipi le sa thubegeng*
 5. *Metse a lone a elelela le Bakgatla*
 6. *Batlhalefi le bagogi ba a le batla*
- (Raditladi 1964:53).

**All the borehole diggers adore it [referring still to the rock
It is a natural spring from the bowels of the earth
It is even adored by all who build houses
It is a huge stone-iron that can't be broken
The wise and the evangelists seek it**

In the second stanza, the poet concentrates mainly on the major socio-economic achievements of Isang. He suggests that cultivators who see the importance of bore-holes adore "*Lentswe*". *Baepadidiba* refers to farmers who use water for irrigation. To the farmers, boreholes are a welcome development to implement modern farming methods. The farmers would no longer depend on rain, which is unpredictable. Isang was worried about the unconquerable beast called

civilization. If they did not learn the new ways, Isang feared the Bakgatla would lose control over their own lives. Isang therefore introduced all sorts of devices to increase his people's production and wealth. In addition to vocational schooling, he encouraged the adoption of the double furrow plough, irrigation, maize and bean cultivation, bull breeding and castration, and the drilling of boreholes for the supply of water for the people of Motšhodi and their cattle in outlying areas. The poet compares Lentšwe with a natural spring. As remarkable as it might seem, spring waters from different geographical areas can taste very different. Spring water is a natural product that comes from the earth and retains the same properties and qualities as its underground source. Depending on the minerals present, water temperature, and other naturally occurring factors, each spring will impart its distinctive "personality" and taste to its water "*motswedi wa metsi a tswang lenagent*" stresses Lentšwe's usefulness, his pureness and his value to the people he rules. Water can also be used to build houses. The builders adore Lentšwe for making water available at all times. Their task has been simplified, and they are able to concentrate on the assignment at hand and not worry about the scarcity of water. For his insistence and focus on positive developments, the poet refers to him as *Kgolo ya Lentšwetshipi le sa thubegeng*. The poet extends the metaphor from stanza 1. This big rock is made up of iron particles. It is therefore difficult to split a rock that is so strong. Here the poet portrays the character of Isang. He has a strong will power and he believes that every dream can be realized if people are disciplined. The line "*metsi a lone a elela le Bakgatla*" means people are enjoying his achievements and share in his success. Many people in Botswana have heard about the economic reforms and their effects in Bakgatland. That is why *batlhalefi* and *bagogi* are looking for Lentšwe. They would like to learn from Isang and emulate him by introducing the reforms in their own communities.

Stanza 3 Verse

1. *Nnaa magosi a rona a phuthegela kae?*
 2. *Magosi a rona a phuthegela Motšhodi*
 3. *Motsanamogolo o itsegeng kae le kae*
 4. *Go thuba lefika palelabafudi*
 5. *Motse wa Bakgatla o godisitswe ke mang?*
 6. *O godisitswe ke lentšwe re le bokang*
- (Raditladi, 1964:53).

Where do our chiefs assemble?
 Our chiefs congregate at Motšhodi
 The most popular capital in the land
 To break the rock that shatters attackers
 Who brought developments in the land of Bakgatla?
 They were carried out by Lentšwe the protagonist

The third stanza opens with a question. *Nnaa magosi a rona a phuthegela kae?* The poet asks a rhetorical question, knowing the answer. This is done to de-familiarise the usual form. The question asked creates more drama because it does not need a response. The question serves to inform the audience about the place of convergence. The poet provides the answer by saying *Magosi a rona a phuthegela Motšhodi*. The poet stresses the importance of Motšhodi as a meeting place. Traditional leaders from across the country come to Motšhodi. When people assemble at a place, one gets the impression that there is something that attracts them. People converge for various reasons. In this instance, they converge for a positive cause. They come to Motšhodi to learn about the new economic developments. The progress that has been achieved by Isang made Motšhodi very popular in the whole protectorate. Hence, *Motsana o*

itsegeng kae le kae, meaning that Motšhodi is the talk of the country; everywhere you go its name is on people's lips. Other innovations introduced by Isang included attention to public savings and the attempt to stop the flow of money out of the Kgatleng. He tried to ban the importation of luxury goods such as hats and silk stockings. The Bakgatla needed his permission to buy expensive goods such as wagons, horses and guns. All grain that was not eaten by the people themselves was sold through a "syndicate" controlled by Isang. This kept the profits in Bakgatla hands and away from the traders. When South Africa banned the importation of African-owned cattle, Isang found ways to smuggle them across the border.

The poet repeats the line *Lefika le palela balefudi* to emphasize that it was through hard-work, endurance and perseverance that Isang managed to attain his goal. This line also highlights the feelings and sentiments of the Bakgatla towards Isang. It gives the impression that some of them did not carry out the tasks willingly. They were not used to these kinds of chores. As we have learned, during Kgamanyane's era, the traditional school was abolished. This meant that there were no age-sets to carry out community work. Isang reintroduced the traditional school and some people did not like the idea. To restore their knowledge of traditions and teach them discipline he revived *bogwers* and *bojale*, that is, initiation schools for boys and girls, which had been banned by Lentšwe. Isang did not include "*white bogwera*" or circumcision in the initiation. Mophato were put to work digging wells, collecting stray cattle, and doing other public work. He encouraged girls to progress through education and introduced the "Wayfarers" (similar to the Girl Guides) to keep them actively involved in community work.

The poet gives an impression that the visitors may try to soften Isang. He may be very hard on his own people, but the poet feels the strangers can make him humble. The poet poses the question: *Motse wa Bakgatla o godisitswe ke*

mang?, to get the attention of the audience. This means, "who is responsible for bringing developments in the community?" The poet may also be reminding the audience about the significance of Isang to the community. He may be telling them that they should be proud to have a leader like Isang. He is stressing the fact that foreigners are able to recognise the good that Isang is doing while his subjects are unhappy and dissatisfied; hence his repetition of "ke Lentšwe" after every question.

4.3.2.3 Education of the youth

Stanza 4 Verse

1. *Nnaa thutego ya Bakgatla e tsentswe ke mang?*
2. *E tsentswe ke Lentšwetshipi la ga Lentšwe*
3. *Lefika marobalela bomang le mang*
4. *Ga se la motlhaba kgotsa mosalakwe.*
5. *Maritibala boreneng ntšwa thata e seyo*
6. *Ke lentšwetshipi la go newa moagi neo*
(Raditladi 1964: 53).

Who brought education to the land of Bakgatla?

It was brought by stone-iron of Lentšwe

The rock that stretches out for everybody

It is not of sandy rock or metamorphic rock

Being content to be a chief without powers

It is the stone-iron worthy of being a gift to a builder

The poet continues mentioning Isang's contributions by way of question and answer. The line *Thutego ya Bakgatla e tsentswe ke mang* means that Isang is responsible for bringing education to his community. We know this because he established the first school in Motšhodi. He initiated the process and monitored its implementation. Isang secured a large annual grant of money for teachers' salaries in Kgatleng and announced his plans for the erection of a new school in Mochudi. Isang wanted his people to meet most of the cost, but he expected the government to assist. "Progress" Isang declared, "means heavier expenditure". The building of the "Mochudi National School" in 1923, under Isang's supervision, was a great achievement. Isang received R3000 from the Bakgatla by taxing his people or sending them to work in the South African mines. He used this money to purchase building materials and hire skilled artisans; Isang then ordered his people to make bricks (300 000), mix cement, and carry materials to the site from kilometres away. Men, women and children, rich and poor, laboured for months. Everything had to be carried to the top of the hill, including water, sand and bricks, even huge pillars. By mid-year the work was finished. The school had eight classrooms and an assembly hall. At the time, Motšhodi was the largest single structure in the entire Botswana.

Children from all over Kgatleng attended this school. Isang especially wanted boys to attend, because only girls were going to school during Lentšwe's time. Isang pressurized father after father to send his eldest son to classes. When money was the problem, Isang paid the school fees. Isang was concerned about youngsters, girls as well as boys, running off to Johannesburg for work. If they learned English, mathematics, agriculture, veterinary science or domestic skills in school, Isang believed they could remain at home to increase the wealth of their families and the Bakgatla as a whole. Isang encouraged the parents to send the boys and girls who did well in school for further education in South Africa. Sometimes Isang paid their fees himself. During the holidays, students returning

from Tiger Kloof and Lovedale College reported to the *Kgotla*. The boys were encouraged to attend *Kgotla* regularly to learn history and customary law from the discussions of the elders. While Isang was an advocate of modern education, he still insisted that the youth know the Batswana traditions and culture.

Isang's hopes lay with the youth. He encouraged parents to take their children to school. He paid school fees for those who could not afford to pay. Putting up the education structure, recruiting teachers and encouraging girls and boys to attend school, was indeed commendable. By pointing out that education was provided by *Lentšwetshipi la Lentšwe*, the poet emphasizes that Isang was the only brain behind the idea.

He goes on to describe Isang as *Lefika marobalela bomang le mang*. This means that he was unbiased; he helped everybody indiscriminately, which is a true characteristic of a traditional leader as the father of the tribe. In his eyes, all his subjects are equal, hence he helps everyone without favour. Isang is not a rock made of *motlhaba* or *mosalakwe*. A rock made of sand or soft elements will crack or split easily. This rock is made up of iron particles. The poet refers to Isang's character. He is strong-willed and does not give in easily. He is focussed and does not back-track before reaching his goal. He cannot accept leadership if his powers are curtailed. *Maritibala boreneneng* is a person who is content with what is given to him irrespective of its usefulness. Such a person cannot reject a position because it means everything to him. *ntšwa thata e seyo* means to be without powers. The poet may be referring to an event when Isang reprimanded Molefi Pilane, his successor, for ignoring his responsibilities. The situation went out of hand and Isang was summoned to *kgotla* (the tribal assembly) where he was found guilty of undermining the leader and was then banished from Motšhodi. Lentšwe is a worthy stone that is used to house people, that is, to give them homes, to provide them with shelter and security.

4.3.2.4. Euology for Isang: Kgomo Ya Bakgatla

Stanza 5 Verse

1. *Nnaa Kgomo ya Bakgatla ba e digetse kae?*
2. *Selelo sa yone se utlwala Mošomane*
3. *Mašwi a yona a tla tlhoka go gamelwa gae*
4. *Go gorisa basadi le basimane*
5. *Nkoo ke na le matlho ka mo tsetseleka,*
6. *Kgotsa loleme lwa mmoki ka mmoka*

(Raditladi, 1964:53).

Where did they banish the Bakgatla cow?

Its lowing is heard from Mošomane

It needs to come home for milking

To feed women and children

I wish I had eyes to discern

Or the poet's craft and art to sing

In the first line, *Nnaa Kgomo ya Bakgatla ba e digetse kae*, the poet compares Isang with a cow. The question creates curiosity in the minds of the audience. They would like to know what happened to Isang. They are waiting for the answer with anticipation. The following line informs the audience about Isang's banishment from Motšhodi. The phrase, *Selelo sa yona se utlwala Mošomane*, confirms that Isang is not in Motšhodi. He is in exile at Mošomane. The image *selelo* also suggest that the cow is unhappy wherever it is. The cow is lowing. The cow lows usually when it contains large quantities of milk in its udder. By lowing, it expresses its discomfort. It is complaining about the muscles of the udder which are painful because of being over-stretched. By lowing, it calls its

calf to come and suckle to end the pain. The comparison between the cow and Isang is relevant. Isang was mother and father to his people, just like a cow is to the Batswana in general. As indicated in earlier stanzas, Isang established schools for the community, he improved farming conditions, he created boreholes and modernized the Bakgatla villages. He also raised the standard of living by changing the Bakgatla's from being servants to masters. He encouraged boys and girls to go to school to free them from the shackles of dependence. He provided his people with vision to become a free people. Just like the life of the Batswana depend on a cow; the life of the Bakgatla depended on Isang. The phrase *Mašwi a yona a tlhoka go gamelwa gae* means Isang's ideas are mostly needed at home. The Bakgatla need Isang to come and continue his good works. They are thirsty for progress, just like a calf is thirsty for its mother's milk. Isang is also eager to go back home and help his people just like the lowing cow that needs to feed its calf. The words *tlhoka go gamelwa* also infer that there is some kind of a problem in the Kgatla village. If the people were happy and satisfied, they were not going to need Isang since he was just a regent. They need Isang because life has changed drastically. First and foremost, Isang was banished from his homeland because he challenged his successor. He was not prepared to keep quiet while his successor ignored his responsibilities. *Go gorisa basadi le basimane* means providing for the community at large.

After mentioning all the good things that Isang had done for his people, the poet feels that such a person deserves to be honoured. By the phrase *Nkoo ke na le matlho ka mo tsetseleka*, the poet wishes he had the appropriate words to portray Isang. He infers that he lacks words to describe the kind of person Isang is. He suggests that Isang is a colossal figure who needs a real artist to describe all Isang's goodness vividly. The phrase *Kgotsa loleme lwa mmoki ka mmoka* also elevates the stature and the integrity of Isang. The poet feels that he is not the appropriate person to give a rendition about Isang. A poet can use a few words to describe a myriad of events. He uses symbolism, imagery and idiom to

depict his experience. In this instance, he opines that it is the duty of the poet to inform and educate his audience.

4.3.2.5 Isang: Unequivocal leader of Bakgatla

Stanza 6 Verse

1. *Ka re, kana temeke ya Bakgatla ke Isang,*
 2. *Kotsepe ya Letšhetšhele morwa Lentšwe*
 3. *Phatlhakgolo palela le metsi a a fisang*
 4. *Boreledi boritelelo, lentšwe,*
 5. *Magatwa ke tšhwene le nonyane tsotlhe*
 6. *Kgomo magamelwa-banyana botlhe*
- (Raditladi 1964:53)

And say, Isang is the unequivocal leader of Bakgatla
 Leader of Letšhetšhele son of Lentšwe
 Strong forehead that surpasses hot water
 Slippery as a soft surface, Lentšwe
 Trampled by all baboons and birds
 A cow that provides milk for all the children

Whereas in stanza five, the eulogy explores the image of a cow full of milk, meaning metaphorically that Isang is full of brilliant ideas for his people; in stanza six other images complete the eulogy. These images reiterate his natural leadership qualities and link him with his ancestors, whose praises he is entitled to share.

In the last stanza, the poet sings the praises of Isang. He says *Ka re temeke ya Bakgatla ke Isang* meaning that he is the unequivocal, undisputed and unshakeable leader. He refers to him as *Kotsepe ya Letšheletšhele morwa Lentšwe* alluding to being the leader of his regiment by birth. Usually when boys and girls go to an initiation school, there must be representatives from the royal family. A member of the age-set from the royal family is automatically the leader of his age-set.

Isang is regarded as *Phatlhakgolo palela metsi a a fisang* describing his strength and endurance. He does not give up easily, even if the odds are against him. The words *boreledi*, *boritelo* are an extension of an earlier allusion to a rock. He is not just a strong rock, but he is slippery too, making him very difficult to handle. Lentšwe Pilane is referred to as:

Pilane ketlapa lantswepilwane
Ketlapa le lebotšheledi, Pilane
Baletshwari botlatloga menwana

Pilane is a rock of iron-stone
He is slippery rock, Pilane;
Those who touch it will lose their fingers
 (Schapera 1965:56).

In Isang Pilane's praise poem as recorded by Hendrik Molefi in 1931, he is referred to as:

O fetile Kgope ntswe laMokwena
Okana ka ntswe lagaabo Mmatone
Kentswe lagaabo Pilane a Pheto
Kentswe lagaboKgetse a Segolo

Kentswe lagaboRrabailekae
Kentswe lagaboTshwabi aSeoka.

He is as big as Kgope the rock of Kwenaland

He is as big as Matone's rock

He is the rock of Pilane Pheto's people

He is the rock of Kgetse Segolo

He is the rock of Rabailekae's people

He is the rock of Tshwabi Seoka

(Schapera, 1965:106)

According to Schapera, Kgope is a large hill just inside the Kwena side of the boundary, with the Kgatla. Matone is also a hill about 16km from Saulspoort in the Pilanesburg. Pheto, a Pilane, is the great great grandfather of Isang. Kgetse Segolo, father of Rabailekae, was an early headman of the Moganetsi Ward; Tshwabi Seoka was similarly an early headman of the Mosiana Ward (1965:108). Therefore, Isang, being a descendant of Pilane I, had a hereditary right to his praises.

Even if one has a good instrument to split the rock, one is still faced with the challenge of breaking a handling it. *Boreledi*, *boritelo* may also mean "unpredictable and full of surprises". *Magatwa ke tshwene le nonyane tsotlhe* means only baboons and birds understand the mystery of this rock. This may mean the people who understand his vision and his thinking. Again to show Isang's significance, the poet repeats the metaphor of cow *Ke kgomo magamelwa banyana botlhe*, a cow that must serve all the children. This implies that Isang is available to help everybody in the community.

Raditladi creates what Scheub refers to as:

“a combination of realistic images from history and metaphorical or comparative images from nature, and the rhythmical grid that compose these disparate images and give them their unity, that the poet moves the audience to meaning” (2002:108).

Raditladi employs many symbolic signs, which move the reader closer to the poem: *Bafudi* (shooters); *baleki* (contesters); *baepadidiba* (well diggers); *motswedi* (fountain); *kgolo ya ntšwetshipi* (large rock of iron-stone); *palelabafudi* (surpass shooters); *lefika la marobalela* (spreading rock); *maritibala boreneng* (contend in chieftainship); *kgomo ya Bakgatla* (cow of Bakgatla); *mašwi a yona* (its milk); *temeke ya Bakgatla* (forthright leader of Bakgatla); *kotsepe ya Letšhetšhele* (leader of his age-set Letšhetšhele by virtue of being a member of the royal family); *phatlhakgolo* (big forehead); *boreledi* (slippery); *boritelelo* (soft surface); *magatwa ke tšhwene* and *kgomo* (trampled by baboon and cow) *magamelwa banyana* (provider of milk to children). The story clings to the lines and images, so that a strong sense of place and event is portrayed. The story holds hard to the sinews of the heroic poem: it is history within which the poem is struggling to emerge. The metaphors that have been employed are pathways to the poem’s poetic centre.

The poet also refers to natural phenomena such as water, forests, rocks, sandy plains as well as animals such as cows. Human activities such as *go epa didiba* (digging boreholes), *go robega masufu* (breaking arm-bones), *go aga matlo* (building houses), *go phuthega* (converging), *go bona thuto* (being educated), *go fepa basadi le bana* (feeding women and children) as well as initiation practices that have also been employed. The images in the poem include historical events such as the installation of a chief; the social, economic and political reforms that were introduced; and the struggle during his reign. There are names of places such as Botswana and Motšhodi as well as names of people, Isang and Lentšwe, including the name of his age-set Letšhetšhele.

Explicating the imagery has revealed not only the life of Isang but has also created feelings about this figure in history. Isang, like Kgama, is a leader that the Bakgatla can be proud of. They draw from him immense pride as a people, and a feeling of belonging.

It might even be inferred that Raditladi's inclusion of the poem "*Isang a Lentšwe*" – a regent ruler, such as Tshekedi, yet a brilliant chief who worked tirelessly to uplift the tribe – is another indirect attack on Tshekedi. In other words, it might be argued that Raditladi did not resist Tshekedi merely for personal reasons, nor because he was a regent as opposed to a true *kgosi*, but because he was innately a difficult person, a troublemaker, and frequently an autocratic ruler, who suppressed his adversaries. During the Seretse affair, Tshekedi was accused by members of the tribe of bribery and of being a thief and a cheat who stole the chief's cattle (Mbanga, 2005:139).

4.4 Conclusion

The significance of Raditladi's work for the present thus lies in his elevation of democratic and humane leadership. He was hard-working, industrious and deeply committed to upliftment, as embodied in the examples of Kgosi Kgama and Isang, as opposed to being an ambitious, autocratic leader, who tends to stir up conflict and suppress opponents. As has been argued, Raditladi's cousin and contemporary, Seretse Kgama, likewise embodied democratic, humane and moral leadership. He was tirelessly and tenaciously dedicated to his people's upliftment. Between 1966 and 1980 "Botswana had the fastest growing economy in the world." (Mbanga 2005:364). Seretse's wise policies, personal integrity and style of leadership contributed to keeping the country free from corruption

(Mbanga 2005:364). The Kgama legacy resonates for African nations in the present, especially in cases where the leadership may have not only have failed to uplift its people, but worse, contributed to deepening social and economic underdevelopment.

Poetry relates a story in the most gripping and fascinating way. It uses language sparingly, and every word carries many images, allusions, insinuations and citations. Poetry is rich in metaphor, which allows readers to have different interpretations of the same concept. It is significant for history to be recorded in poetry because by reading and enjoying poetry, people will be learning about their societies' mores, traditions and customs. It is very important to learn about the past so that we can predict the future, and there is no better way to do this than through the medium of poetry.

CHAPTER 5

Landscape images and sound repetition as metaphor marker

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to look at Raditladi's use of images from natural environments. The natural, social and historical environments point to cultural identity. Raditladi draws images from his natural, social and historical environments to portray a vivid picture of his subject. He uses images from the animal world (e.g. cattle as shown in chapter three), mythology, the ancestral and Western worlds, birds, insects, the landscape and of violence. This chapter will focus on sound repetition as metaphor marker. First sound metaphor will be introduced in the collection generally, then landscape images from sample poems e.g. *Fatshe la Batswana*, *Lenaga*, and finally the poem "*Aferika*" will be explicated.

5.2 Sound metaphor

Raditladi introduced a new approach to writing, and had a unique style of combining the spirit and music of indigenous African poetry and creativity with the form and style of the Western influenced poetry.

For example, in some poems such as *Bosiela*, he uses parallelism together with end-rhyme this way:

- **Parallelism and rhyme**

Parallelism means to give two or more parts of the sentences a similar form so as to give the whole a definite pattern. This is the kind of repetition where a word, a predicate or a phrase is repeated, or the same structure is repeated several

times. Schapera (1965:17) defines it as a correspondence, in sense or construction, of successive clauses or passages where, in each pair of lines, the first halves are identical in wording and the second are basically the same in meaning. Raditladi employs this device in the following example:

Bo go kolobetsa bo sa go rapele

Bo go tlhabe dinao, ditlhako o di rwele

It moistens you without pleading with you

Piercing your feet while wearing shoes

Parallelism		End-rhyme
<i>Bo go</i>	<i>kolobetsa bo sa go ra-</i>	<i>Pele</i>
<i>Bo go</i>	<i>tlhabe dinao, ditlhako o di</i>	<i>Rwele</i>

Parallelism is a feature of indigenous African creative art, whereas end-rhyme is that of Western European orientation. The two devices in his creative work do not repulse each other, but they combine well and produce harmony.

- **Linking and rhyme**

Linking is a structural pattern that links up various lines by commencing the next line with the last or middle word or words of the previous line. Linking brings in repetition which could be significant in heightening the effect. Linking also serves to enhance the melodious effect of the poem. (Schapera,1965:19)

In the following example, Raditladi uses linking and end-rhyme to good effect. The combination of these devices, does not only produce good sound but also shows continuity of the performed action:

A etsa fela serurubele leseding
Dirurubele di falola lefifing

Like a butterfly in the misty light
Butterflies only survive in the dark

Linking		End-rhyme
<i>serurubele</i>		<i>Leseding</i>
<i>Dirurubele</i>		<i>Lefifing</i>

In the same lines, one observes that there is also repetition of the sound /r/ which appears four times. To top it all, the sound /e/ appears no less than ten times in the two lines. It is not surprising that the lines sound like a musical tune. Raditladi selected his words carefully and used them meticulously, like a well rehearsed song.

In some cases, Raditladi uses many devices at the same time to produce the desired sound and meaning:

Kgomo di ngongorela marole
Dinku di lelela dikonyana
Le mifiko mo masakeng e ole
Koko di robatsa dikokwana
Kgaotsa, kgaotsa, tlhe ngwananyana wa me
Kgaotsa, kgaotsa, mothonyana wa me (Raditladi 1964:4)

Cows are bleating for their calves
 Sheep are bleating for their lambs
 The poles at the kraal have fallen
 Hens are putting chickens to sleep
 Stop crying, stop crying I beg you my baby
 Stop crying, stop crying, my special child

- End rhyme

By glancing at the lines, you cannot miss the rhyming words on the printed page. Before one even begins to pronounce the sounds, one is attracted to this rhyme format which makes a serious statement about what one is about to get from the sound of the music of the words in print:

<i>Kgomo di ngongorela marole</i>	(a)
<i>Dinku di lelela dikonyana</i>	(b)
<i>Le mifiko mo masakeng e ole</i>	(a)
<i>Koko di robatsa dikokwana</i>	(b)
<i>Kgaotsa, kgaotsa, tlhe ngwananyana wa me</i>	(c)
<i>Kgaotsa, kgaotsa, mothonyana wa me</i>	(c)

(Raditladi, 1975:4)

The ababcc rhyme system is used to create the rhythm of a mother cuddling the baby to sleep. This system has been employed throughout the poem.

- Internal rhyme

...robatsa kokwana.

- Reverse rhyme

Batho ba yona ba ntse ba botha (Raditladi, 1964:7)

- Parallelism and language structure

Subject	Predicate	Object
Kgomo	di ngongorela	Marole
Dinku	di lelela	Dikonyana

In the above example, Raditladi uses parallelism of sentence construction to create tone. Tone, in literature, may be defined as the writer's or speaker's attitude toward the subject, the audience, or toward herself/himself. Almost all the elements of poetry go into indicating its tone: connotation, imagery, and metaphor; irony and understatement; rhythm, sentence construction, and formal pattern. The poet chooses words for sound as well as for meaning. Verbal music is one of the important resources that enable the poet to do something more than communicate mere information. Essential elements in all music are *repetition* and *variation*. The repetition of initial consonant sounds, as in "tried and true," "safe and sound," "fish and fowl," "rhyme and reason," is alliteration. The repetition of vowel sounds, as in "mad as a hatter," "time out of mind," "free and easy," "slapdash," is assonance. The repetition of final consonant sounds, as in "first and last," "odds and ends," "short and sweet," "a stroke of luck," is consonance. The combination of assonance and consonance is rhyme. Rhyme is the repetition of the accented vowel sound and all succeeding sounds. In a lullaby, sound, music and tone are particularly important, since it is these that communicate and make meaning to the baby who, as yet, will not understand the words.

- Repetition

- Alliteration

Dinku di lelela dikonyana d x 3

- Consonance

Kgomo di ngongorela marole g x 3

Koko di robatsa dikokwana

k x 4

• Assonance

Kgomo di ngongorela marole

o x 5[

Koko di robatsa dikokwana

o x 4 + a x 4

Another striking device used is the repetition of the same or similar sounds to create music. In the following lines there is also end rhyme.

Dibatana ga di na polo.....(ka)..... batho (a)

Ga ba nthate tota ba nki.....(la).....lekongkong (b)

Ke sebedu sa nama sen.....(kgela).....mokong (b)

Se jewang le ke ntšwa sedi...(bela)motho (a)

(Raditladi, 1964:15)

The language used by Raditladi is musical, full of rhythm and rhyme. His choice of words, repetition of sounds and employ of devices such as parallelism, linking and imagery, is phenomenal. His great poetic asset is to blend form and diction to highlight meaning. The art of creating poetry resides in African people in general which is present in their indigenous poetry. This art extends to other areas of their creative works such as plays and novels whether written in an African language or in foreign tongues. Piriye Isaka Seme's "Regeneration of Africa" speech, as addressed in chapter 2, is a good example of tone and the lyricism of words which can create a mood and evoke feelings. The music of the speech conveys the feeling of grandeur, inspiration, greatness, achievement, "civilisation" as well as a love for and belief in the innate greatness and potential of his beloved Africa:

5.3 Landscape imagery

Landscape is a word that contains, or that includes, many things: such as trees, grass, cows, and the light of an evening sky. Landscape is a word which may encompass various images. It opens before the viewer's inner eyes like a wide screen, multiple-sensual world in cinemascope. It is an image that could contain almost anything, that is, trees, sky, birds, wild animals, rivers, oceans, dams, forests, rain, winter, spring, summer, autumn, day, night, darkness and light. Landscape metaphor has been used in speeches, dramas, novels and poetry.

In all images associated with the landscape, Raditladi seems to be struck by the fundamental identity that exists between the landscape and life in general. He is enchanted by the breathtaking beauty of the landscape before him. Raditladi perceives admirable beauty with all its concomitant blemishes. This awe and wonder that the poet feels is outwardly expressed in the lyricism, the music, the tone and the mood of the poetry. As already discussed in chapter three in *Lenaga*, Raditladi is looking at nature as a nourishment of the spirit. He is looking at the trees, the grass and flowers as agents of calm, comfort, peace and relaxation. Again in chapter two, Raditladi paints the same setting in *Selelo sa Morati*. Accordingly, a beautiful landscape provides milieu for the expression of love and happiness. The beauty of nature is central to many of Raditladi's poems, as would be discerned in the following excerpts:

Fatshe la Batswana (*The Land of Batswana*)

1. *Pelo ya me e kwa lefatsheng la Batswana*
2. *Go leleka phudufudu le photsana*
3. *Pelo ya me nna tota ga e mono sekgoeng*
4. *E kgakalakgakala fela kwa dikgweng* (Raditladi 1964:22)

My heart is longing for the land of Batswana
 To chase the steenbuck and the duiker
 My heart is not here in the city
 It is far-far away in the veldt

One cannot help but be struck by the music of these lines with the characteristics of end rhyme, parallelism, assonance and consonance. Repetition of the consonant /ph/ and vowels /e/ and /u/ in the second line displays a good composition of words and a fascinating melody. Parallelism of the first and third lines does not only provide a beautiful tune but also emphasizes the effect of loneliness. It suggests that his body is empty; there is no heart, which is the seat of emotion, sensation, passion and feeling. This shows that Raditladi feels lost, abandoned and deserted. Raditladi's use of words is awesome.

The image that is used relates to a location in the Batswana homeland. The Batswana people inhabit dense forests where game is plentiful; the steenbuck and the duiker roam freely. The availability of game in the forest is a sign of wealth and it shows that people do not go hungry. This is a rich area that sustains its people. To a person who grew up in the country, open space represents freedom of the soul and peace of mind. *Go leleka phudufudu le photsana* is to hunt. In traditional African society, hunting is central to livelihood.

According to Tlou and Campbell (1985:77) hunting was generally a communal affair among the Batswana. Usually one or more regiments took part, although individuals and families sometimes hunted for themselves. *Dikgosi* would order a hunt, *letsholo*, and say which regiments would take part in it. It was a duty of all who were called to take part in it. Anyone who did not do so, might be severely punished or killed.

There were two types of hunters:

- The *mophato* went to where there were large herds of game, sometimes for long periods of time, until they had enough food for the tribe. The hunters slowly encircled the herd and closed in, stabbing the animals as they tried to break through the circle.
- A special trap called *hopo* in Sekgalagadi was set. Men, women and children went to a place where large herds often grazed or came to drink water. Here they dug a big hole about twelve metres deep. This was covered with branches and earth to hide it. From it, two fences of bushes were erected in the shape of a funnel, about a kilometre long and a kilometre wide at the mouth. The regiments surrounded or sometimes used grass fires to drive a herd or heads of game into the funnel and so into the pit. If any game jumped out of the pit they stabbed it with spears

In his poetry, Raditladi reminisces on that traditional life. Running behind the steenbuck and the duiker is an indivisible part of his formative years. He is longing for his childhood days, his culture, his people, his cousins and friends. He is longing for his village, his folk and the traditional way of doing things. The choice of two contrasting words appearing at the end of juxtaposed lines, *sekgoeng* (city) and *sekgweng* (forest) is as effective as it seems deliberate. The reader is tempted to make a comparison of diametrically opposed concepts from the two expressions. The contrast in the meaning of the two words is far apart. *Sekgoeng* refers to a place where white people reside and where black people have gone to find work. It is an industrial area, with the loud sounds of trains, machines, buses and lorries. Life is fast; there are fast cars, noisy people, flashing lights and people who are always rushing somewhere. It is a hub of gangsters and criminal activities.

In contrast, *Sekgweng* refers to the rural areas, the countryside with its open spaces and big fields, wild and domestic animals, big and small trees, clean rivers and verdant valleys. This is a place where blacks reside. Life is slow and peaceful. People respect each other and their work environment.

The two contrasting words with the same sound, have been used as a rhyming device. The power of this image compels the reader to think about his/her own place of origin, his/her family and his/her long lost friends. The Batswana reader typically inhabits, negotiates and moves between these worlds of contrasts.

The same idea of fauna and flora is embedded in the images evoked by the following lines:

Lenaga (Landscape)

*E rile letsatsi le tloaba ka akola
Ka gasagasa matlho a me le lenaga
Ka bona mašu, marula le makala
Mokoba, motlhwane le mmolayanoga
Tlhare tse dikgolo makgabisanaga,
Bommameriti di bothelang dinare
Di bothelang le ditshidi tsa matlhare*

*Lenaga kana le lentle letlhafula
Le lentle fa dipula di tšora
Bojang bo le botala, kgomo di fula
Phologolo tsa naga tsotlhe di kgora
Di šotse, di tseketlela ka mahura,
Lefatshe le kgabile ka botalana,
Le metsi a elaelela ka mekgatšhana (Raditladi 1964:23)*

At sunset I was filled with jubilation
 I cast my eyes far and wide
 I saw camel-thorn, sclerocarya caffra [morula] and giraffe-thorn
 I saw acacia-burkei, olea Africana and perihari capens
 Huge trees adorning the veldt
 They provide shadows that attract buffaloes
 They also appeal to living organisms and leaves

Landscape looks so beautiful in spring
 It is so beautiful when rains descend
 When the grass is green and cattle graze
 All animals of the veldt having plenty
 When they look sleek and fat
 When the land is bright with green colours
 When water is permeating every valley

Raditladi appreciates the natural environment he is describing. He sees trees big and small, grass and cows. He is looking at the landscape in the morning. He is looking at *mokala* (a big bushman cwa-nap or knob-thorn tree), *mokoba* (a tree with a huge trunk and long branches), *motlhwale* (evergreen tree with a very big stem), *mmolayanoga* (species of acacia the root of which has medicinal qualities), *mašu* (a tree with thin white thorns) and *marula* (a tree that has edible fruit that is used for making an intoxicating drink. Its soft wood is used to carve various types of utensils). The above images come from the topography of the poet's landscape. It is a visual metaphorical image. He perceives similarity between life's goodness and the visual pictures. After all, metaphor implies the power to see similarity in difference (Rosmarin, 1985:23).

The beautiful trees decorate the landscape and make the forest look attractive. The different trees with their various structures, textures, colours, lengths, widths and size, create a magnificent setting. The adjacent natural beauty ignites a feeling of joy and jubilation. The beauty described by Raditladi becomes all-embracing when it is complemented by animals beneath the trees. The emphasis is on spring; the beginning of life. This image serves as a tonic to sooth the reader's spirit and emotions. Poetry is metaphorical medicine that is therapeutic. This period represents the good days Raditladi experienced after going through the hardships of life with his uncle Tshekedi and his divorce from Ofentse Seane of Mafikeng. He was happily married to Kanana Mosupye and had four children with her. He was writing books and life was admirable.

Again, by glancing at the following lines, one cannot miss the rhyming words on the printed page. One is mesmerised by alliteration and assonance which imparts a refined sound. A person cannot help being enthralled by linking and parallelism that bring harmony of words. One is attracted by the expedient way in which Raditladi manoeuvres language to produce splendid sound:

- **End rhyme**

<i>E rile letsatsi le tloaba ka akola</i>	(a)
<i>Ka gasagasa matlho a me le lenaga</i>	(b)
<i>Ka bona mašu, marula le makala</i>	(a)
<i>Mokoba, motlhwale le mmolayanoga</i>	(b)
<i>Tlhare tse dikgolo makgabisanaga,</i>	(b)
<i>Bommameriti di bothelang dinare</i>	(c)
<i>Di bothelang le ditshidi tsa matlhare</i>	(c)

- **Alliteration**

E rile letsatsi le tloaba ka akola

- Assonance

Ka gasagasa matlho a me le lenaga

- Linking

Bommameriti di bothelang dinare

Di bothelang le ditshidi tsa matlhare

Lenaga kana le lentle letlhafula

Le lentle fa dipula di tšora

- Parallelism

Subject	Predicate	Object
<i>Lefatshe</i>	<i>le kgabile</i>	<i>ka botalana</i>
<i>Le metsi</i>	<i>a elaelela</i>	<i>ka mekgatšhana</i>

It is not surprising that Raditladi compares the river with a snake. As Wrights (in a review on Antoine-Roger's *Bolamba's Ezanso – Songs for my country*) rightly points out:

Other than its beauty, rivers have a significant meaning in the lives of people. They conjure up its scenes and suggest its ways and its atmosphere. There are also evocations of Africa's mystery and magic (1979:261).

African poets like Raditladi, use words and phrases that evoke Africa's mystery and magic. This is evident in the rivers that look like snakes, behave like snakes and move like snakes. As already mentioned, the Okavango River in Botswana is

called the *Thamalakane*. The following lines bear testimony to this exquisite river that flows through a dense forest:

Thamalakane (Okavango river)

1. *Thamalakane o ikeditse noga*
2. *O editse lebolobolo tlhageng*
3. *O ikgarakgara fela le naga*
4. *O tsabakela ka mmala sekgweng*
5. *Jaaka letsatsi le selefera*
6. *Tlase ga meriti ya matsiara* (Raditladi 1964:25)

**Thamalakane you act like a snake
Emulating a puff-adder in the grass
Curling and twisting in the veldt
You are a shining sparkle in the veldt
Shining like sun and silver
Beneath the shadows of Matsiara trees**

In the fifth line of the stanza *Jaaka letsatsi le selefera* (Shining like sun and silver), the alliteration of // serves to foreground the line as a whole. What is interesting about this sound repetition, apart from the general emphasizing effect, is that the subset of reverse rhyme of /le/ establishes a phonic (and grammatical) link between the notion Thamalakane (the river) and the qualification shining (tsabakela). The researcher's interpretation of this instance of sound repetition is that it creates a close identity between the river and this one characteristic of splendour. Its grandeur is expressed through sound repetition, felt to be its essential characteristic. This lyrical /, by virtue of a close relationship to the river, is able to see the essence of its loveliness in the bountiful variety described in the

rest of the poem. The way the lyrical / sees the river as superbly and innately beautiful, provides the foundation for the river sun metaphor and the river silver metaphor in the same line. Although this sound repetition is grammatically necessary (the /e- in this case is determined by the requirement of correspondence between the prefixes of the noun and the adjective) it is perceived as semantically functional because it relates two content words which are important components of the central metaphor.

Again, Raditladi compares the movement of the river with that of the snake. The two objects are different. One is inanimate while the other is animate. Raditladi describes a side-winding movement of the snake this way.

Snakes, crawling on smooth or slippery surfaces, place their bodies in static friction with the substrate. For them to move, the segments of the body are lifted off the ground from neck to tail, forming a characteristic track in the sand; after being lifted off the ground and put down again, a short distance away, the front part of the body begins a new track while the rear part of the body completes the old track. Because of the static contact and lifting of the body, the snake travels almost diagonally relative to the tracks it formed on the ground. Muscle activity during side-winding is similar to that of lateral undulation except that some muscles are also active bilaterally in the region of the trunk when lifting. (www.Louisiana.edu.)

It is true that many rivers do a lot of meandering as well. The natural tendency of a river flowing across the country is to meander or form loops as it erodes the outer-side of a bend and deposits sediments on the inner-side.

Raditladi's observation of two landscape images is appropriate. The zigzagging movement of the snake is similar to the winding movement of the river. Both the images shine; the sun shines on the river and the snake's scales catch and

reflect light. The meaning is farther extended to yet other features of the landscape, namely, the sun and silver. The shining silver can be located beneath the Matsiara trees. Here, Raditladi is painting a beautiful image with words.

Wauthier (1966:171) views the African conception of the universe as follows:

All beings, human as well as things, are related forces, which form the universal cosmic force. This belief in a kind of intimate, coherent universe, enables the African poet to identify with the whole of nature

It could therefore be surmised that most of the images relating to nature in Raditladi's poetry reflect the fundamental identity he perceives between nature and life. Employing an adequate associate device, he refers yet again to another powerful image, the rain:

Pula (*The Rain*)

Kgomo ya ga rre ke raya maru a legodimo
Ke raya maru a mantsho a mmala wa sebito
Tshepe e nana e kgabaganya legodimo
Jaaka dikanono ga e na botshabelo

**By my father's cow I am talking about heavenly clouds
 I am talking about the dark clouds, pure black clouds
 Young and tender springbuck are crossing the heavens
 Just like cannons, they are inescapable**

The Batswana do not believe that rain is a mystery that only God can unravel. According to Setswana tradition, there is communication between the living and the ancestors. In summer, when people prepare to plant crops, they first ask the

gods to give them rain. The only person who has the powers to ask the ancestors for rain is *moroka*, who is the leader or *kgosi* of a tribe. Through the help of the ancestors, *kgosi* appoints a *ngaka* from the village, who takes instructions from him. Young girls known as *diolamelora* (who are at puberty but are still virgins) as well as boys of the same age, carry out the task of spreading a mixture of medicine and water all around, singing tunes used for this ritual. On their way back to the *kgotla*, the clouds start forming and soon the rain descends. Rain, like cattle, is a gift from the ancestors and, as has already been mentioned, when there is famine, they donate a cow to the ancestors known as *kupe*. It is for this reason that Raditladi uses a cow rain metaphor.

For ages, Western and other cultures around the world were ignorant of how rain was formed. It was only after weather radar was invented that it was possible to determine that rain is formed in three stages. First, the "raw material" of rain rises up into the air with the wind. Later, clouds are formed, and finally raindrops appear.

- **Religious texts and scientific postulations**

The Qur'an's account of the formation of rain refers exactly to this process. In one verse, this formation is described in this way:

It is God who sends the winds which stir up clouds which He spreads about the sky however He wills. He forms them into dark clumps and you see the rain come pouring out from the middle of them. When He makes it fall on those of His slaves He wills, they rejoice. (The Qur'an, 30:48)

The following three stages are outlined in the verse more technically.

FIRST STAGE: "It is God who sends the winds ..."

Countless air bubbles formed by the foaming of the oceans continuously burst and cause water particles to be ejected towards the sky. These particles, which are rich in salt, are then carried away by winds and rise upward in the atmosphere. These particles, which are called aerosols, function as water traps and form cloud drops by collecting around the water vapour themselves, which rises from the seas as tiny droplets.

SECOND STAGE: "... which stir up clouds which He spreads about the sky however He wills. He forms them into dark clumps ..."

The clouds are formed from water vapour that condenses around the salt crystals or dust particles in the air. Because the water droplets in these clouds are very small (with a diameter of between 0.01 and 0.02 mm), the clouds are suspended in the air, and spread across the sky. Thus, the sky is covered in clouds.

THIRD STAGE: "... and you see the rain come pouring out from the middle of them"

The water particles that surround salt crystals and dust particles thicken and form raindrops, so, drops that become heavier than the air leave the clouds and start to fall to the ground as rain.

There is a close association between the above description and Raditladi's phrase. By *Tshepe e nana e kgabaganya legodimo* legodimo Raditladi implies that clouds are moving backward and forward. The line *Jaaka dikanono ga e na botshabelo* means the rain is descending and people and animals are looking for shelter.

Raditladi uses a metaphor to illustrate the formation of clouds before the rain falls down. He compares the clouds with his father's cow. Just before the rain comes down, the clouds will gather together. When they knock against each other they produce a disconcerting sound like that of a lowing cow. The cow lows when its udder is overstretched and feels uncomfortable. As the clouds come closer to each other and they collide with each other, they make a terrifying sound just like cannons. Raditladi, here, refers to the cracking of lightning; when lightning glimmers, people and animals become anxious. The striking of lightning is compared with guns that discharge fire. The sparking of lightning produces light like a flashing camera.

Clouds and cows are part of the landscape. Again the poet reminds us of the significance of both objects. Both images are central to the Batswana and Africans in general. In an Afrikaans poem by Eugene Opperman, a similar pattern is apparent:

Die dans van die reen (The dance of the rain)

O' die dans van ons suster

Eers oor die bergtop loer sy skelm

En haar oge is skaam en sy lag saggies

En van vir af wink sy met die een hand

Haar armband blink en haar kralle skitter

Sy vertel die wende van die dans

Sy nooi hulle uit want die werf is wyd en die bruilof groot

Oh the dance of our sister

First she slyly peeps over the mountain top and her eyes are shy and she laughs softly

And from far away she waves with her one hand

Her bracelets shine and her beads sparkle

She tells the winds of the dance

She invites them because the yard is wide and the wedding big

Marais compares the approaching rain with a sister who is about to get married. She is shy to look at people on this special day. She is so frightened because sometimes such days are capricious, unpredictable and erratic. The sister is nervous because she wants the wedding to be sound. To ease her nerves, she waves her hand from afar, before she comes within reach. She is doing this to relax her mind and to reduce the tension. Marais compares the flashes of light with the shining bracelets and sparkling beads of the bride. As the sister waves, she is inviting the wind to stir the clouds. The sister is inviting everybody to come to the wedding because the yard has ample room for a big wedding. This is a powerful landscape metaphor employed by both Raditladi and Marais. They use related but different images in their poetry about the formation of rain. Raditladi uses a cow metaphor and Marais uses the dance of the sister on a wedding day. Both poets use symbols such as roaring sound, light flashes and dark skies.

From the example above, it is clear that all nations across the globe experience similar occurrences. They sense, touch and have identical feelings towards the world and what it offers. Occurrences such as rain are experienced by every country on earth. People in the world, irrespective of where they live, need water for survival. They need water to irrigate their plants, to build, to cook, to drink, to wash their body and their clothes. Some use water as a mode of transport, taking goods from one place to another. People use water to generate electrical power

to supply current to millions of industries and houses all over the world. The engines of many industrial machines, including cars, buses, ships and aeroplanes, use water as a cooling system. For water to be available, we need rain to fill rivers and dams. It is for this reason that various people express their gratitude to rainwater as it gives life and sustenance. It is for this reason that Islam praises Allah for the wonderful present he bequeaths to his people. By associating rain with the works of Allah, the Moslems elevate rainwater to the highest realm in the lives of Islam. Eugene Marais, an Afrikaans poet compares rain with wedding celebrations. This is an important day, just like a birthday. Eugene opens his lines with preparations for the wedding, the excitement and nervousness that the event creates among the organizers. When the preparations are over, the big event occurs, which is breathtaking to say the least. According to Marais and the Afrikaner tradition in general, a wedding day is the beginning of a new life, just like the rain brings new life to the land. To Raditladi and the Batswana in general, rain can only be compared to cattle, which provide and sustain life for the people. For the Batswana, anything that is associated with cattle belongs to the highest domain in the hierarchy of their valued possessions. Just like the Moslems, the Batswana elevate rain to godly deeds when they associate it with *kgomo*, and in the same breath, associate *kgomo* with God, *Modimo o o nko e metsi* meaning God with a wet nose or God who is the provider.

From the following exemplification, it is clear that Raditladi draws some images from total surface form of an area of dense trees and plenty valleys to give expression to his overt aversion for those abstract situations he illuminates. Landscape, here, refers to rural scenery:

Tau (The Lion)

Nna ngwana wa ga rre setlhaolelanageng

Ke fitlhetse dikgomo leswaratlhatlheng

Di fula fela nokeng ya letšhikiri,

I, child of my father, reside in the veldt

I found cows in the forest

Grazing next to the Letšhikiri River

A lion refers to itself as "child of the veldt". It lives in the jungle and rules the jungle. As cattle were grazing in a dense forest, they did not even suspect that an enemy was near. Next to the jungle there is a river that provides plants and animals with water. Again Raditladi touches on landscape, especially the fauna and flora. The unity of nature – one element drawing energy from the other to survive – shows Raditladi as a deep thinker and a philosopher:

Seetebosigo (Month of June)

Lenaga la rona le lehumeng

Le apotse kobo ya letlhafula

Le ikgasa bosetlha dipounameng

Digogwane tsa tlhoka difela

Dinonyane tsa itsapa go lela,

Our landscape is damaged

Undressed of its blanket of spring

Its lips are dry

Frogs are not singing hymns

Birds are not chanting melodies

Raditladi uses metaphor to describe the state of his country in winter. He compares his country with a poverty stricken place. *Lehuma* means poor, deprived, destitute, impoverished and pitiable. His tone is that of a person who is ashamed of his country. It is disgraceful and appalling to be associated with it. He

further uses personification by saying *Le apotse kobo ya letlhafula*, as if a landscape has human characteristics. He continues with the same figure of speech by saying *Le ikgasa bosetlha dipounameng* as if landscape has lips. The image of silence, that is no singing frogs and no chanting birds, represents sadness and agony and it reminds one of a poem that deals with pain, misery or grief such as *La Belle Dame sans Merci*. In this poem, there are images that represent the reference. Observe:

*O what can ail thee, knight at arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge has wither'd from the
 lake, And no birds sing.
 O What can ail thee, knight at
 arms, So haggard and so
 woe-begone? The squirrel's granary is
 full, And the harvest's done.
 I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and
 fever dew,
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast withereth too.
 (Keats, J in E.W. Parker: 137)*

"La Belle Dame sans Merci" (French: "The beautiful lady without mercy") is a ballad written by the English poet John Keats. It exists in two versions, with minor differences between them. The original was written by Keats in 1819, although the title is that of a fifteenth century poem by Alain Chartier. The poem describes the encounter between an unnamed knight and a mysterious fairy. It opens with a description of the knight in a barren landscape, "haggard" and "woe-begone". He

tells the reader how he met a beautiful lady whose "eyes were wild"; he set her on his horse and she took him to "elfin grot", where she "wept, and sigh'd full sore". Falling asleep, the knight had a vision of "pale kings and princes", who cried, "La Belle Dame sans Merci hath thee in thrall!" He awoke to find himself on the same "cold hill's side" where he is now "palely loitering". The poet uses landscape metaphor as a framework of his poem. Because the knight is associated with images of death – a lily (a symbol of death in Western culture), paleness, "fading", "wither[ing]" – he may well be dead himself at the time of the story. He is clearly doomed to remain on the hillside.

Raditladi is looking at landscape during winter time just like the time of the event in "La Belle Dame Sans Merci". The land in Raditladi's poem is lacking colour and intensity. The trees and grass have withered. Winter is associated with drought and famine, whereas spring represents good life and prosperity. The poet, through this image unconsciously reveals his yearning for the restitution of the ties that bind people with their creator (custodian of good life). This appears to be a solemn prayer from the poet to his creator or ancestors to come to his rescue. He is asking them to end anguish and distress and to bring fortune and plenty. The poet is using this image to illuminate the difference between death and life, success and failure or good and bad times. In African ethnology, as already indicated, life begins on the first day of spring and ends on the last day of winter.

Interestingly, President Thabo Mbeki in 2000, when Botswana and South Africa held a joint official opening of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, indicated that the

occasion symbolises in concrete terms the meaning of true collaboration in this century of hope for the African continent. It is surely what Botswana's revered poet, Leetile Disang Raditladi had in mind when he wrote in his eloquent poem, *Aferika*, which is analysed below. Raditladi's "*Aferika*" emphasizes the natural beauty and wealth of the continent, exemplified by mountains, rivers, hills, trees,

sunshine, rainfalls; domestic and wild animals; minerals and general possessions of Africa.

As the foregoing examples illustrate, *Sefalana sa menate* celebrates the immense natural and human resource heritage bequeathed to us by nature and our ancestors, with an injunction to hold it in responsible stewardship on behalf of future generations. To give Africa a better tomorrow, means that today we must, together, do everything in our power to rid our beautiful mother continent of the scourge of poverty and underdevelopment.

In another moving speech by the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, landscape became the focus:

I am an African. I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades, the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas and the ever-changing seasons that define the face of our native land.

My body has frozen in our frosts and in our latter day snows. It has thawed in the warmth of our sunshine and melted in the heat of the midday sun. The crack and the rumble of the summer thunders, lashed by startling lightening, have been a cause both of trembling and of hope.

The fragrances of nature have been as pleasant to us as the sight of the wild blooms of the citizens of the veld.

The dramatic shapes of the Drakensberg, the soil-coloured waters of the *Lekoa*, *iGqili noThukela*, and the sands of the *Kgalagadi*, have all been panels of the set on the natural stage on which we act out the foolish deeds of the theatre of our day.

At times, and in fear, I have wondered whether I should concede equal citizenship of our country to the leopard and the lion, the elephant and the springbok, the hyena, the black mamba and the pestilential mosquito.

A human presence among all these, a feature on the face of our native land thus defined, I know that none dare challenge me when I say – I am an African!’

Nna ke Moaferika. Pelo ya me e mo lefatsheng la dithota, lefatshe la madiba, lefatshe la dithaba, lefatshe la dibaka, la dinoka di emang sesiti, lefatshe la dikaka, lefatshe la ditlhare tse ditale ngwaga otlhe, ke lefatshe la ditšhese, lefatshe la mawatle a magolo. Le ke lefatshe la ditlha di fetogang jaaka leobu, ditlha tse di tthalosang lefatshe la borraetshomogolo. Mmele wa me o sule dikgapetla ka ntata ya mariga matala, o bolailwe ke semathana se se wang leratharatha, se tswang godimo legodimong. Semathana se simolotse go gakologa, se gakolosa ke bothito jwa letsatsi la Aferika, Aferika lefatshe la letsatsi. Dikgadima di simolotse go duma; di lela go laletsa medupe pula e namagadi. Matlakadibe a tla a sa lalediwa, ga benya ga thunya, ga ba ga utlwala mogosi, mogosi wa letshogo le tsholofelo Ga utlwala monko o o monate wa tlhago, ke monko wa ditšhese le dithunya, baagi ba naga ya lenaga.. Dithaba tse di goletseng godimo tsa Maluti, di itogile semelemethe, metsi a mmala wa sebito a Lekoa, Igqili gammogo le Thukela, metlhaba ya sekaka sa Kgalagadi, tsotlhe di tshwana le boidididi jwa batho mo seraleng sa tlhago; serala se mo go sona re diragatsang tiro tsa bosilo, tiro tsa metshameko ya letsatsi .Ka nako dingwe, fa ke tsenwe ke letshogo, ke utlwa ke akabala, gore ke ipitse moagi wa Aferika; go itekanya le tilodi le tshetla ya dipoa, tlou ya mmadisanyane le tshepe ya naga, phiri kgotsa mokwepa o montsho le monang o o hupileng botlhoko.Fela botho bo teng gotlhe, selebego sa naga ya borraetshomogolo, ga go ope yo o ka nkganetsang fa ke re – Nna ke Moaferika!

The speech of former president Thabo Mbeki shows images of and allusions to Africa's landscape, as portrayed and illustrated by Prixley Isaka Seme's

Regeneration of Africa, and it is embedded with hints, references and citations of Raditladi's poem *Aferika*. Mbeki's speech articulates Africa's natural landscape explicitly and unequivocally, just like Seme's *Regeneration* and Raditladi's *Aferika*. The regeneration stresses the intellectual capacity of Africans demonstrated by inventions and discoveries using metaphorical language:

Like some great century-plant, that shall but bloom

In ages hence, we watch thee; in our dream

See in thy swamps the Prospero of our stream;

Thy doors unlocked, where knowledge in her tomb

Hath lain innumerable years in gloom.

Then shalt thou, waking with that morning gleam,

Shine as thy sister lands with equal beam.

Prixley Seme is looking forward to Africa's blossoming into a flower. As time passes by, he envisions Africa's real potential. Africa's riches and prosperity are well renowned. Africans are educated and the dark days are over. The future of Africa is shining. The sister (Africa) has a wide smile.

As hinted at earlier, Raditladi's *Aferika* looks at the natural environment of the hills and valleys, the grass, the trees, the reptiles, the small and big animals as well as the domestic animals. Raditladi looks at the rivers and the mineral resources found in Africa's soil. In terms of images portrayed by Prixley Seme and Raditladi, Africa is free but its people are still in chains of slavery and colonization. The intention of the two Africans is to draw other Africans towards

ideal freedom. Employing an adequate associate device, Raditladi gives a powerful image of Africa:

5.4 Sound repetition as metaphor marker in Aferika

Aferika (Africa)

Stanza 1:

1. *Lefatshe leno le lentle jang!*
Land this is beautiful / how/so
 How lovely is this land

2. *Le makhubu ee, le dipala.*
With hills oh yes with plains
 Oh yes, with its hills and plains

3. *Le ditlharetlhare le majang*
With many trees with weeds/grasses
 Densely wooded and grassy

4. *Dikgama, dikgokong, diphala*
Red hartebeest, wildebeest, impalas
 Antelopes, wildebeest and impalas

5. *Phologolo tsotlhe tsa naga,*
Animals all of the veld/wild
 Animals of the veld

6. *Kgatwane, Kgwathe le dinoga*
Lizard, iguana and snakes

Lizards, Iguanas and snakes

7. *Digagabi di ilang mariga,*
Reptiles which dislike winter those who
Crawl on their breast and make noise
 Reptiles that despise winter

8. *Di aila fela mono Aferika*
They creep only here in Africa
 Creep only here in Africa

9. *Lefatshe le ke mosetsana*
Land this is a girl
 This land is a lass

10. *Moratwa [w]a [di]thaka tse dikgolo*
One who of peers/ those who are great is
Admired/ gentlemen The loved one
 One cherished by eminent lads

11. *Ntswa fela a le mmala motshwana*
Although only she is the colour black with the+skin of the female (girl)
 Although she is dark skinned

12. *Mmala o o bosulabogolo*
Colour which is bad omen+big
 The colour of bad omen

13. *Selefera ke meno a gagwe*

Silver is teeth of her

Her teeth are a shining silver

14. *Gouta ke marinini a gagwe;*

Gold is gums of her

Her gums a glittering gold

15. *Taemane ke dinala tsa gagwe*

Diamond nails of her

Her nails a sparkling diamonds

16. *Tsotlhe tse di mono Aferika*

All these are here in Africa

All these are abundant in Africa

17. *Lefatshe leno la meriti,*

Land this of shadows

This is the land of still shadows

18. *La [di]thunya di methalethale;*

Of flowers of variety/sundry

A paradise of sundry flowers

19. *La dinoka di emang sesiti,*

Of rivers of standing pools

A land of meandering rivers

20. *Di ikgarakgarang jaaka tlhale*

The wind like thread

Zigzagging like thread

21. *Ke lefatshe la matlhomola*
The land of pitiableness/ compassion/ suffering
 This land is pitiable
22. *Ruri fa go le letlhafula*
Truly when it is summer
 Verily in summer time
23. *Fa dinku le dipodi di fula*
When sheep and goats they graze
 When sheep and goats graze together
24. *Diruiwa tsa mono Aferika*
That which of here in Africa
I possess/possessions
 Africa's vital possessions
25. *Aferika, fatshe la letsatsi*
Africa land of sun
 Africa the land of sunshine
26. *Le phatsimang ngwaga fela otlhe,*
That shines year after year
 Brightening throughout the year
27. *Aferika lefatshe la metse*
Africa land of water
 Africa land of tawny water

28. *A masetlha [di]nokeng tsotlhe*
That which [is] tawny [in] rivers all
 Permeating every river

29. *Lefatshe leno ke la temo*
Land this of agriculture (crop farming)
 This land can be cultivated

30. *Lefatshe leno ke la kgomo*
Land this is of cattle (livestock farming)
 This land is a haven of cattle

31. *Lefatshe leno ke la khumo*
Land this is of wealth
 This is the land of riches

32. *Tse di bonwa mono Aferika*
These they are found here in Africa (things)
 All these are abundant in Africa

33. *Lefatshe leno le lentle jang!*
Land this is beautiful how/so
 How lovely is this land

34. *Le makhubu ee, le dipala.*
With hills oh yes with plains
 Oh yes, with its hills and plains

35. *Le ditlharetlhare le majang*
With many trees with weeds/grasses

Densely wooded and grassy

36. *Dikgama, dikgokong, diphala*
Red hartebeest, wildebeest, impalas
 Antelopes, wildebeest and impalas
37. *Phologolo tsotlhe tsa naga,*
Animals all of the veld/wild
 Animals of the veld
38. *Kgatwane, Kgwathe le dinoga*
Lizard, iguana and snakes
 Lizards, iguanas and snakes
39. *Digagabi di ilang mariga*
Reptiles which dislike winter those who
Crawl on their breast and make noise
 Reptiles that despise winter
40. *Di aila fela mono Aferika*
They creep only here in Africa
 Creep only here in Africa

5.4 .1 Analysis

The researcher started by translating the Setswana text into English. The translation was read by colleagues in the sub-department of Setswana at Unisa and suggestions for changes were selectively incorporated. The translation process itself is considered a stage in the interpretation of the poem because some of the discussions about the grammatical categories, for instance, which

arose from the translation, resulted in aiding the researcher's subsequent interpretation of the central tenor-vehicle relationship.

After completing the translation, recordings of performances were collected on cassette to be used as a control mechanism in the study of sound repetition.

The next step was to do separate a analysis of the poem based on what the researcher found to be its salient aspects. This was followed by a series of discussions with colleagues and separate readings. This paragraph is divided into two distinct readings. The first reading is from the entry point of sound repetition and the second from the semantic associations that are activated by the central metaphorical construction. It may be worth noting that the researcher at the initial stages of the reading of the poem, perceived that the second stanza of the poem as a fore-grounded part, and that this could be explained on the grounds of the metaphor that has been identified in line nine.

5.4.2. Methodology and the object of analysis

- To apply a model for the study of sound repetition, which has been devised for and applied to the poetry of G.M. Hopkins to Setswana poems to establish the strength of the model and to determine what adjustments may need to be made for poems in the oral literary tradition. This aim is based on the assumption that printed poems in Setswana form part of the oral tradition, by virtue of its being an African language. This is supported in general by what Brown (1958:15) terms "the debt of almost all poetic forms to oral rhythms and vocalizations". More specifically, in the case of the poem *Aferika*, the allusion to a traditional Setswana proverb may be considered to be directly representative of orality following Zabusi (1995: 33) who considers allusion to proverbs in printed literature as a manifestation of the oral.

- To investigate how orality manifests itself in the sound of Setswana poems. A hidden assumption, on which this research aim is based, is that there is, of necessity, a specific and strong relationship between orality and the phonic organization of poems, which requires description. This is narrowed down to the specific area of sound repetition, which may be viewed as a manifestation of parallelism. According to Van Gorp (1980:226), it is widely accepted that parallelism in general, and sound repetition in particular, characterise orality in literature.

5.4.3 Findings

The finding of this paper is that sound repetition in this poem serves specifically as a marker of metaphorical information in the sense that it accentuates, continues and establishes relationships between elements of metaphorical constructions. In essence, the researcher has identified the foregrounded stanza and the central metaphor itself, because the sound repetition helped to bring the relationship of certain parts of lines to one another. This finding coincides with the researcher's view of sound in poetic language use as an organizatory element of which the guiding principle is repetition. According to this view, sound repetition has a potential semantic function because it establishes relationships of equivalence.

However, apart from the fact that this poem is found to be a demonstration and affirmation of the communicative role of sound repetition, it is found that the specific sound repetitions are perceived as foregrounded and also have the additional function of activating and establishing an intertextual relationship. This is the allusion to a Setswana proverb which proves to be essential for the

activation of specific metaphorical associations. It is precisely this intertextual relationship which enables our reading of the poem in terms of the oral tradition.

In the first line of the poem, *Lefatshe leno le lentle jang!* (How lovely is this land!), the alliteration of /l/ serves to foreground the line as a whole. This effect is strengthened by the repetition of the line in the last stanza, which is in itself a repetition of the entire first stanza. What is interesting about this sound repetition, apart from the general emphasizing effect, is that the subset of reverse rhyme of /le/ establishes a phonic (and grammatical) link between the notion LAND (*lefatshe*) and the qualification BEAUTIFUL (*le lentle jang!*). The researcher's interpretation of this instance of sound repetition is that it creates a close identity between the land and this one characteristic of beauty. Its beauty is portrayed through sound repetition, felt to be its essential characteristic. This is the kind of beauty that could only be seen by the eyes of one who is a child of that land; by one who is native to the land. This lyrical /, by virtue of a close relationship to the land, is able to see the essence of its beauty in the variety of bounty described in the rest of the poem. The way the lyrical / sees the land as superbly and innately beautiful, provides the foundation for reading of the land girl metaphor ironically in line eleven, which will be discussed in the second half of the paper. Although this sound repetition is grammatically necessary (the /e- this case is determined by the requirement of correspondence between the prefixes of the noun and the adjective), it is perceived as semantically functional because it relates two content words which are important components of the central metaphor.

In the descriptions of all the things that make the land beautiful, other instances of functional sound repetitions occur which establishes smaller units of semantic relationships. For the sake of brevity, a description of the units will be omitted, with the exception of the alliteration of /f/, assonance of /a/ and line internal rhyme of /la/ in the last line of the first stanza (line eight) *Di aila fela mono*

Aferika. This alliteration emphasizes that the land in question is only this land, AFRICA.

The bottom line is that the sound repetitions have outlined and related the central components: LAND, BEAUTIFUL and AFRICA

The vehicle, *mosetsana* (girl), in the central metaphor, *Lefatshe ke mosetsana* (This land is a girl) (line nine) participates in patterns of reverse rhyme of /mo/, alliteration of /m/ and assonance of /o/ throughout the second stanza as follows:

9 Lefatshe le ke mosetsana

Land this is a girl

This land is a lass

10 Moratwa [w]a [di]thaka tse dikgolo

One who of peers/ those who are great

Is admired / gentlemen / the loved one

One cherished by eminent men

11 Ntswa fela a le mmala motshwana,

Although only she is colour black+skin of the female (girl)

Although she is dark-skinned

12 Mmala o o bosulabogolo

Colour which is bad omen+big

The colour of bad omen

13 Selefera ke meno a gagwe

Silver is teeth of her

Her teeth are a shining silver

14 Gouta ke marinini a gagwe

Gold is gums of her

Her gums a glittering gold

15 Taemane dinala tsa gagwe

Diamond nails of her

Her nails a sparkling diamond

16 Tsotlhe tse di mono Aferika

All these are here in Africa

All these are abundant in Africa

The sustained occurrence of these three sound patterns has the effect of establishing a relationship of phonic (and in some cases, grammatical) equivalence between the girl *mosetsana* and the various features and characteristics ascribed to her in this stanza, such as her desirability, one who is admired and sought after by eminent men (*moratwa a thaka tse dikgolo*), her physical features that are focal expressions in the metaphorization of the vehicle "girl" in terms of the tenor land, such as her dark colour, her silver teeth and her golden gums. The researcher perceives lines eleven and twelve as particularly foregrounded in terms of the increased intensity of the repetition of the sound patterns under discussion. This seems to tie in with the crucial importance of the aspect that is qualified in these lines, which is the dark colour of the girl. This is compounded by the elaboration of the first reference to her colour as the colour associated with a bad omen (*bosulabogolo*). The sound repetitions relate to the descriptions of the girl to the land, not only through the semantic associations of the qualities, but that all the features are closer to those of the tenor land more

than to those of the human girl, except for the foregrounded feature of colour, which can be viewed as appropriate both to the tenor "land" and to the vehicle "girl". In the last line, the assonance of /o/ and reverse rhyme of /mo/ draw the phrase that is repeated like a refrain throughout the poem here if Africa (*mono Aferika*) into the pattern of focal expressions that relate to the way the tenor and the vehicle interact in this poem. This phrase brings the sound patterns full circle in that this land is a girl (*mosetsana*) and all the features of the girl are those that pertain specifically in and to Africa (*mono Aferika*) i.e. this land is Africa. The sound repetition in this stanza therefore serves to connect the tenor and vehicle in terms of auditive qualities, which mediates the perception of the semantic relatedness in the context of the metaphorical construction. It is now possible to describe the central tenor and vehicle as:

AFRICA (THIS LAND) IS BEAUTIFUL [AS] A GIRL

Aferika (le lentle jang) *mosetsana*

TENOR VEHICLE

The elements of this construction are established in this configuration by sound repetition, but the construction also becomes evident when the title *Aferika* (Africa) and the pattern of syntactic parallelism of the first lines of every stanza are taken into account. The following paradigm emerges:

- 1 *Lefatshe leno le lentle jang!* (How lovely is this land)
- 9 *Lefatshe le ke mosetsana,* (This land is a girl [lass])
17. *Lefatshe leno la meriti,* (This is the land of still shadows)
- 25 *Aferika fatshe la letsatsi* (Africa the land of sun [shine])
33. *Lefatshe leno le lentle jang!* (How lovely is this land!)

The central tenor and vehicle relationship between land and girl depends strongly on the shared quality of beauty (as specified in lines one and thirty five). There is a Setswana proverb which qualifies the notion of beauty as follows:

Bontle bo na le dibebejane bo sa loeng bo a rota.

Translations or paraphrases of this include:

Beauty has in it good and bad/ beauty is the source of conflict and reconciliation/beauty, if it does not bewitch, it heals.

It is interesting to note that the intertextual relationship between this proverb and the text of this poem, in the form of an allusion, relies not so much on the presence of the word "beauty" in the poem *Aferika* or on the way this element is associated with the tenor "land" and the vehicle "girl" in terms of the various facets of their shared beauty, but rather on the strong phonic parallelism that draws the proverb into the sound meaning relationship which is so strongly communicative in the second stanza. This is evident in the reverse rhyme of /bo/, the alliteration and diffuse repetition of /b/ and the assonance of /o/ in the proverb. The patterns of sound repetition provide a strong intertextual connection which qualifies the two opposing facets of the notion "beauty" in terms of the proverb. This allows for a reading of the central metaphor itself in terms of this proverb, upon which much of the productive ambiguity of the metaphorical relationship relies, as will be demonstrated in the following paragraph.

5.4.4 Land-girl metaphor

As has been indicated earlier, this paragraph will focus on the semantic associations that are activated by the central metaphorical construction. Four images will be used to illustrate or visualize the main aspect of the central metaphor. The associations are as follows:

Landscape and wild animals

The land is a girl

Minerals

Agriculture

This paragraph will concentrate on the second image, viz., The land is a girl, because of its centrality. The association between the land and the girl is elaborated by other images in the poem, such as silver, gold and diamonds.

Line nine, is perceived as metaphorical. When reading the line, it is realized that it is inconsistent with the nature of the world of humans and objects. This is a noun metaphor because two nouns, the main subject in the frame and the nominal focus or focus subject, are semantically and grammatically incompatible but interconnected by a verb to be (*ke*).

The main subject is a tenor while the focus subject is a vehicle. The tenor is the crucial element here; the function of the vehicle is to specify the tenor metaphorically. The interpretation of a nominal metaphorical expression depends critically on the interaction between literal associations surrounding the tenor and the vehicle.

Lefatshe leno ke mosetsana

Vehicle human

Object has feelings

Inanimate beautiful

Beautiful attractive

Untouched loveable

Fertile desirable

Young probably

untouched virgin

In the syntactic environment the vehicle *lefatshe* is humanized in that all the object characteristics that could not be transferred to a human being are eliminated; the characteristics denoted object, no power of speech are therefore moved into the background. All other characteristics that typify a land can, in fact, be transferred to a human being. Thus in terms of the above interpretation, the line *Lefatshe leno ke mosetsana*, implies that the land is beautiful, loveable and attractive.

It is important to note the relationship between the above-mentioned line and line one of the stanza, viz:

Lefatshe leno le lentle jang

The land this is beautiful so

The land has the power to allure. It is amiable, lovely and delightful. What makes Africa beautiful is her hills and her plains, densely populated forests, sundry flowers and meandering rivers, still shadows and the brightening sun. The land is not only physically attractive; she has inner beauty which is covered by soil, i.e. her precious minerals. This suggests that the girl is as beautiful as the land. Her eyes are shining like silver, she has golden gums and diamond nails. The beauty of the girl is portrayed around the qualities of the land. A lovely land attracts the

attention of colonial powers as much as an attractive girl attracts an eminent gentlemen. The poet also employs irony to good effect by emphasizing that:

Ntswa fela a le mmala motshwana

Although she is dark-skinned

Mmala motshwana symbolises both the skin colour of the native Africans and the continent's level of advancement as perceived by the colonists. Africa was regarded as a dark continent

According to Gary Gibbs (2002), when the European colonial powers embarked on conquering Africa, they labelled it the "Dark Continent". They saw it as a vast and dangerous place full of savage people. This could not have been further from the truth, as Africa and her multihued people have spawned some of the world's most advanced, colourful, and exotic civilizations. It is well established that African cultures were among the earliest to employ iron, build cities, and develop trade routes. However, in the 7th century, Islam replaced Christianity as the dominant religion, steeping the continent into a darkness without Christ.

Gibbs believes that Africa urgently needs the gospel. Islam has a powerful grip, especially in the north, and is seeking to extend its stronghold. Paganism also has millennia-old roots that run deep. While our fellow African brothers and sisters know Bible truth, they are still very dependent on the assistance of the Western churches to advance the gospel. While in America, it is often difficult to capture the attention of the secularized, Africans come in droves to hear the Word of God. As the following report shows, now is the time to aim the spotlight of truth on the "Dark Continent". This is evidenced by pronouncements such as the one made by Hegel in (Makgoba 1997: 97) that:

“Africa is comparable to a land of childhood still enveloped in the dark mantle of the night, as far as development of self-conscious history is concerned.”

From Raditladi’ eloquent poetry that articulates the social, cultural and historical aspects of Batswana life, it is apparent that Hegel was ignorant or misinformed about Africa and African affairs. His ethnocentric accusations are based either on false records or a lack of researched material. His misconceptions are however not surprising, as many European researchers who profess to be experts of African philosophy and history, publish false information about Africa. By reading Raditladi, we get first hand information from the horses’ mouth. His writings reveal his experiences, not second hand information from the people who do not know the languages of Africa nor understand the cultures of the people.

African people were painted as hostile, uncultured and uncivilized by Western scholars and researchers. By employing the conjunction *le fa*, Raditladi looks at Africa with the eyes of the colonist. The lyrical / gives the viewpoint of the colonist. Even if Africa is a dark continent, the colonial powers still scramble for her wealth like greedy, wealthy gentlemen who always chase beautiful girls. The association between the land and the girl has been used appropriately. Note the contrast, not just between the myth/lie of the dark continent and the light of Christianity, but the contrast between the West’s greed for material things, such as diamonds, gold and silver and the African thirst for spiritual light/spiritual truth/cosmic unity.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that G.M. Hopkins' model can be applied for the study of sound repetition to Setswana poems. The study has also proved that there is a relationship between the orality and phonic organization of poems.

Sound repetition in this poem serves specifically as a marker of metaphorical information in the sense that it establishes a relationship between the elements of metaphorical constructions. The patterns of sound repetition provide a sound intertextual connection, which qualifies the two opposing facets of the notion beauty in terms of the proverb. The reading of the central metaphor in terms of the proverb upon which much of the productive ambiguity of the metaphorical relationship relies, has been demonstrated in the second paragraph of this discussion (5.1.3.4).

CHAPTER 6

Cultural relevant Pedagogy in Raditladi's poetry

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will concentrate on Raditladi's creative genius, as highlighted by his unique style of deracinating the cultural devices of the Setswana and their significance in poetic form. It is an admirable reflection of his background, traditional culture in essence and being raised in accordance with the norms and traditions, values and beliefs of his people. In African traditional culture, it was the role of parents to educate their children. Boys will always associate with their fathers and girls with their mothers. The parents played a significant role in the formation of their child's character. They become teachers and disciplinarians. There was an intense concern for educating the young in the ways of their ancestors so that they may, in turn, pass the same ways to their descendants. It was the duty of every parent to love and to promote the welfare of their children under the watchful eye of the *badimo* (ancestors).

In Raditladi's era, informal education still played a significant role. For instance, every day of the week, when all the household chores were done, the whole family sat around the fireplace. Older people, especially grandmothers and grandfathers, would start narrating folktales. The listeners also participated by singing folksongs, clapping their hands and danced if need be. The medium of instruction was the mother tongue, and this made it easy for Raditladi and the other children of his time to understand and use the language to the best of their ability. They learned stories by heart because they were repeated over and over. This kind of scenario links up well with some of the writings of Plaatje in his 1916 bilingual collection, recently republished in 2004, and again in 2007 with

illustrations. In a story entitled *Katlholo ya Kgosi* (The King's Judgement), he states that:

Batswana ba na le polelo nngwe ke e. E tshwana le katlholo ya ga Solomone e e bolelwang mo Bebeleng, ntswa baruti ba pele ba re ba fitlhetse e itsege mo Batswaneng. Bebele e ise e kwalwe ka Setswana.

The following is a Batswana story. It is similar to the Bible story of the judgement of Solomon, but the pioneer missionaries say that they found it to be known among the Batswana before the Bible was ever written in the Setswana language (Jones & Plaatje 2007:15).

In short, the story relates that two new mothers both claimed one baby after one woman had accidentally suffocated her baby during the night and steals the other woman's child. *Kgosi* (the chief or king) asks for a sword to cut the baby in half. One mother acquiesces, while the other pleads with the chief to spare the child's life and give it to the other mother. Her love for the baby is stronger than the pain of losing the baby to the other mother. The chief discerns that she who pleaded for the baby's life must be the real mother, and settles the dispute in her favour. Whereas, in the Bible story, the emphasis is on the discernment and wisdom of the King, in the Batswana story, the emphasis is on the mother. It is explicitly stated that:

*Katlholo e, ke yona e e simolotseng seane sa Setswana se se reng:
"Mmangwana ke yo o tshwarang thipa ka bogale."*

This judgement is the origin of the Setswana proverb: The mother of the child is the one who grasps the knife by the blade (Jones & Plaatje 2007:15).

The Setswana proverb and story extol the strength and courage of the mother's love, which will sacrifice, endure pain and brave danger for the sake of her child. Whereas Plaatje's story acknowledges the Bible, and the missionaries, and hence one view of the story that is focused on the king's wisdom, it simultaneously adds another dimension to Setswana culture, as reflected through proverbs, highlighting another view of the story, focused on the strength, tenacity

and resilience of Batswana motherhood. There are always at least two ways of viewing a story, depending on where one stands, but there is also a place of convergence. Our shared human identity allows us to enter the space between cultures and languages and to learn about "the wonderful diversity of our oneness".

During Raditladi's era, boys herd sheep and goats and later cattle. During this period they would learn the vocabulary used by herd boys; conduct, habits and behaviour of cows, sheep and goats; and the different parts of the body and what they represent. They would learn the different colours of animals and what they represent and different kinds of whistling, which they believed was sharpened by drinking the cow's urine. They would also create their own praise songs to communicate with these domestic animals.

Like many rural boy who spent most of his time with cattle and was harshly disciplined by his elders – brothers, cousins, uncles and any other seniors in their community, Raditladi was socialized into the mores of his society . An old man passing where they were herding cattle, could call on them and then find an excuse for thrashing them. Such an incident would never be reported to their parents. This was one way of making them obedient to seniors, to carry one's own burden of pain and suffering – these are the true qualities of manhood; a goal that is constantly held before the boy from a very early stage. *Monna ke nku o swela teng* (A man is like a sheep. He does not cry out even if he is in pain).

As a small boy, Raditladi acquired this knowledge and erudition. He was surrounded by uncles who had obtained both cultural and Western education i.e. his mother's brothers, the sophisticated Ratshosa brothers, and his knowledgeable paternal uncles Sekgoma II and Tshekedi Kgama. He witnessed the traditional judicial structure centred on the hereditary chief. The chief

presiding over the *kgotla* (the tribal court), and passing judgement. Learning the wisdom of the Setswana proverbs such as “*Kgosi, thipa e sega moloots*” (A chief is like a knife that would cut the sharpener) signifying that “owing to the mere fact that the chief has a network of law-enforcers, advisors and tribal police” he has the “ability to deal effectively with disrespectful, misbehaving and law-disregarding individuals within the tribe.” (Sebate 2001:270). From a tender age, he was initiated into the traditional, formal and modern forms of upbringing.

Raditladi started school in Serowe, a rural village where customs were upheld. All these experiences are engraved in his personality. He learned to appreciate natural beauty, the thatch houses, cattle kraal, tribal court, traditional clothes, shoes and hats. He bonded with domestic and wild animals and beasts as well as the birds of the veldt. He appreciated mountains, rivers and plains and learned to cherish the traditional music, drums and dance. He valued his fatherland for its quietness and serenity. These experiences filter into his poetic work so that sometimes the art reads like a continuous conventional autobiography.

6.2 Multi-cultural South African setting

This study is based upon the premise that learners in our multi-lingual and multi-cultural South African setting are not blank slates to be written upon, but bring to the classroom cultural resources that can and should be capitalized on to facilitate learning and teaching. In South Africa, that cultural capital may include a vernacular that is textured and complex, rich in proverbs, songs, stories and history. Ignoring that cultural capital, people may unwittingly undermine, disparage and negate certain types of intelligence. Culturally-relevant texts and pedagogy validate learners’ lived experiences, which in turn, stimulate engagement and enhance self-confidence. Culturally restorative texts and pedagogy can redress the effects of racism that resulted in stereotypical misrepresentations of African cultures and peoples with a negative effect. It is important that the basic education of African children should include their culture

6.3 Cultural capital of our African learners

South Africa's Eurocentric education system assumes Western sensibilities, yet African learners bring a unique set of skills drawn from their natural, social and even historical environments, such as skills of negotiation and problem-solving, learned in families with many siblings (Ntuli 1999:196) or in the extended family. In settings such as the church, learning and teaching takes place through participation and performance, the antithesis of the passive classroom mode where opportunities to interact are typically highly structured and bounded (Ntuli 1999:197; Asante 1988:62–63). For Africans, knowledge is not a collection of dead facts but “has a spirit and dwells in specific places” and one learns through direct experience (Ntuli 1999:197; Asante 1988:80–81), that is, through doing and through immersion in the human situation. Moreover, knowledge is inseparable from ethics, which informs its application (Asante 1990:11; Van der Walt 2006:210), and wisdom entails the ability to integrate knowledge, ethics, direct experience, social intelligence etc. It is perhaps commonplace to say that Africans acknowledge the wealth of wisdom embodied in their poetry, proverbs and stories. Poetry and story frequently encapsulate or explicate a proverb. One of the ways in which people can be relevant to the sensibilities of African learners is to use poetry in the story (and proverbs), originating from an African culture, beginning at the primary level (Mashige 2002:60). Culture is a good foundation on which education needs to be built, but people should guard against it being used as an instrument of change or a tool of control, as was done in the past.

6.4 Culture as ideology and a tool of control in the past

Schools, in the colonial and apartheid context, became sites of control. By dismissing African cultural objects as unworthy of school study, education became complicit in “a systematic assault on people's languages, literature, dances, names, history, skin colour, religions, indeed their every tool of self-

definition.” (Ngugi, 1993:51) In education, as in the broader society, culture as an ideology was a primary tool of oppression (Mashige, 2002:52; Ntuli, 1999:191). Under apartheid, there was a hierarchy of cultures in which “whites arrogated themselves a central and pivotal role ... their monuments ... languages, philosophy and education were promoted by the state while others were left to fend for themselves” (ibid:193). “They proscribed our initiation schools that taught the love and protection of nature” (ibid:192). Our African cultures were sometimes flagrantly suppressed, as with the forbidding of vernaculars in mission schools (ibid:191); children, too young to understand what was wrong with speaking their home language, were routinely punished. Our African cultures were sometimes distorted in subtle ways, as with the West’s elevation of reason, an implicit attack on emotion, arguably the primary faculty leading to understanding oral stories and oral historical poetry, constructed and performed using structures of feeling (Scheub 2002). In the end “we have been interpellated into the Western ideological machinery, hence the need for decolonising the mind” (Ntuli 1999:189). “[O]ne cannot build a truly African identity ... on the basis of borrowed and ill-understood cultural practices of the west” (Mashige, 2002:59). We believe that the education we offer can make a difference either for or against the decolonizing process, which entails cultural relevance and restoration. Specifically, as modelled here, it entails affective re-identification with our African languages, poetry, stories, proverbs, histories, cultural norms and social values. The poetry of Raditladi, though written in the dark days of colonization and apartheid, bequeath a fresh new start to the study of African poetry, history and culture. Hence the thesis of this chapter focuses on teaching for cultural restoration.

6.5 Thesis

Raditladi’s cultural connoisseur and how he explicates in it his creative work gave rise to bridge-building efforts, such as the production of his poetry *Sefalana sa Menate*. Raditladi’s cultural proficiency is articulated in his collections of published Setswana plays and novels, e.g. *Motswasele II*, a historical drama

about the *Bakwena* Kingdom, *Dintshontsho tsa lorato*, a political piece of work which elucidates the ills of racism and tribalism, *Mokomaditlhare*, a novel about social tribulations and deteriorating moral fibre in the community, as well as his translation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* into Setswana. Furthermore, his vision prompted the reprinting of his works long after his death in 1971. In light of the critical need to tear down the myth of Western cultural superiority in our educational institutions, and to restore the equal status of African languages, literatures, cultures and histories, this research argues for the revitalization of African poetry in all spheres of life. The researcher believes that Africa's shared human identity affords an entry point into the in-between space between cultures and languages where learning and teaching can take place.

6.6 Theoretical constructs: hybridity, negotiation and translation

Given that generations of Africans have been negotiating a middle course between imposed Western values, norms and sensibilities and home cultural norms, values and sensibilities, hybrid cultural identity or hybridity seems like a fitting theory to inform our study. "What is theoretically innovative, and politically crucial, is the need to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on these moments of processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences" (Bhabha 1994:1). Bhabha, who popularized hybridity, uses various terms including "cultural difference" to denote the dynamic cultural identities of previously colonized peoples, as in India and Africa. He writes:

The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The 'past-present' becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living (Bhabha, 1994:7).

Bhabha's notion of hybridity, especially the renegotiation of cultural identities at the moment of articulation is appealing in that it restores the rhetorical agency to formerly marginalized Batswana communities, allowing them to become subjects of their history, reformulating their distorted cultures and identities in the present.

It is 'the in-between space' (of translation and negotiation), he writes, 'that carries the burden of the meaning of culture' (38). The reason for this is that translation and negotiation are principles of difference; ways in which something other, something new can emerge (Viljoen & van der Merwe 2007:9).

Bhabha's theory is again compelling in that it uses the analogy of translation, and we are advocating here the use of African poetry. Bhabha describes hybridity as "the irresolution, or liminality of translation, the *element of resistance* in the process of transformation, 'that element in a translation which does not lend itself to translation'" (1994:224).

This background links up well with Raditladi's cultural connoisseur in his poetry. For example, in the poem *Bosiela*, Raditladi depicts the sense of loss and emptiness brought about by death. The title of the poem is appropriately designated. *Bosiela* means orphanhood, a person who does not have a mother and a father. Raditladi tries hard to find something that can be regarded as a cure for orphanhood. While reminiscing about solids and liquids that are used to clean a variety of objects, he finds it difficult to find the correct substance. Raditladi is asking questions to try and find a solution to this terrible state.

Bosiela ga bo phimoge sekalobadi
Ga bo na motho a bo tlhapa ka mosidi
A bo phimola a bo tlhapela bodibeng
Go tswa maswe, jone bo sale nameng

Orphanhood cannot be wiped off like a scar
 It has no person washing it with soot

Wiping it off by washing in a lake

Dirt comes off but it remains in the flesh

Raditladi is addressing the inner feelings of a person after losing his parents. He reflects *bosiela* as a painful and unforgettable experience. He accentuates that this condition cannot be erased by using strong detergents and solid chemicals that remove tough stains. It is like a permanent stubborn spot that remains indissoluble in one's clothes. Raditladi further elaborates that *bosiela* is irreversible and its effects are everlasting.

Raditladi's philosophy here can be interpreted to suggest that there is no medicinal or spiritual cure for *bosiela*. It is a known fact that within the African cultural setting there is support structure, to comfort and care for the orphan. When the parents die, an uncle and an aunt or any close relative takes over as parents, as was the case with Seretse Kgama (see chapter one) whose parents died when he was still very young and his uncle Tshekedi raised him as his own son. The guardians will accept the responsibility of loving and caring for the orphans. They are also accountable for their good behaviour, educating them through the principles of *botho*, so that they can become good citizens. No matter how much affection and attention they may get from their step-parents, this would never substitute for their parents' love. Raditladi, here, describes the feelings in metaphorical language. By saying *ga bo phimoge sekalobadi* he denotes that orphanhood is not easy to erase; it is like a scar. Raditladi again suggest that *Ga bo na motho a bo tlhapa ka mosidi*, remains stubborn and inerasable.

From a traditional cultural background *mosidi* is used by the Batswana and Africans in general to clean their teeth. *Mosidi* has a reputation of removing even the most stubborn stains one can think of. *Bosiela* is an imaginary state of affairs that occurs only in the mind. It can neither be seen nor touched. Raditladi personifies *bosiela*. Personification is the technique of giving a non-human thing

human qualities such as hearing, feeling, talking, or making decisions. Raditladi uses personification to emphasize the essence of his subject. The use of this device makes *bosiela* stand out. By personifying *bosiela*, the subject looks interesting and Raditladi creates a new way of looking at *bosiela*. He continues using metaphor to farther illustrate and vindicate his point:

Ke ledimo le jang motho le matlhape

Moselesele o sadisang le makape,

Go sale bolota go sale botlhoko

Go sale sebedu se tlhokang dipheko

It is an ogre that devours people and livestock

The thorny tree that leaves poisonous barbs

And leaves swelling and pain

It leaves rotten remnants that needs herbs

By comparing *bosiela* with *ledimo* and *moselesele*, Raditladi uses images within his cultural setting. *Ledimo* symbolises cannibalism, which is central to the Setswana folk-stories. Cannibalism is about giants who roamed the African forests and killed and devoured little boys and girls who were not eager to listen to their parents. *Moselesele* is a species of thorn bush found in many areas of southern Africa. *Moselesele* signify the piercing action of the thorn of the sickle bush, which causes pain. Raditladi uses the two images appropriately to elucidate the pain caused by *bosiela*. From the exemplification, one sees the compatibility between sorrow caused by *Ledimo* and pain instigated by the thorns of the *moselesele*. By using one metaphor after the other Raditladi tries to demonstrate and authenticate the effects of *bosiela* by using miscellaneous images. In the following example he asserts that:

Bosiela ke pula ya kgogolamoko

Ke mosetlho o sa rwalelweng ditlhako

Bo go kolobetsa bo sa go rapele
Bo go tlhabe dinao, ditlhako o di rwele

Orphanhood is a chaff remover (winter rain)
It is a thorn that cannot be worn jointly with shoes
It moistens you without pleading with you
Piercing your feet while wearing shoes

Raditladi employs another metaphor by comparing *bosiela* with *kgogolamoko*. The noun *kgogolammoko* is derived from the word *gogola* meaning to gather and carry along. *Mmoko* is fine chaff that causes itching. *Kgogolamoko* is winter rain or rain that descends after harvest to clear away the chaff left on the threshing floor. This kind of rain cleans away the chaff, which is food for birds such as doves. Hence Batswana have a proverb “*Kunkuru leba le le tona ga le ke le rutana le le namagadi mmokong*”. *Kunkuru* is the sound made by a dove cooing, interpreted as speaking with affected or exaggerated admiration. This means that even in the best of times, such as meal times, the male dove will never divulge a big secret. By comparing *bosiela* with *kgogolamoko*, Raditladi illustrates that *bosiela* deprives people of their loved ones just like *kgogolammoko* deprives birds or doves of their food. Again Raditladi reiterates the pain caused by *bosiela* with the use of *mosetlho*, a thorn that pricks painfully. This is another image that is culturally rooted, and is understood by the Batswana as they share the natural environment. He again uses another landscape metaphor to emphasise his point:

Bosiela ruri ke leselamotlhoka
Le utswang dikoko, masogo le dikgaka
Bo tsena fela le fa ntlo e ageletswe
Bo bo bo senye lokgapho lwa ntlo e feetswe

Orphan-hood is truly a stalk picker
It steals chickens, partridges and guinea fowls

It enters even if the house is fortified

It spoils the traditional décor of a clean house

Leselamotlhoka is a carnivore bird which looks like *letototo*, a whistled tailed mongoose. These birds are known for their notorious acts of destroying fowls and are found mostly in southern African forests. Raditladi's comparison shows how much pain *bosiela* brings to people. The pain left on the people's mind is enormous and the extent of loss and grief is immeasurable. What makes the situation even more dreadful is that people cannot prevent *bosiela* from entering their premises. It comes at any moment and causes havoc. Raditladi makes yet another cultural symbolism by saying *Bo bo bo senye lokgapho lwa ntlo e feetswe*. Traditional Batswana women like decorating and embellishing their surroundings in an attractive way. *Lokgapho* or *go kgapha* was one way of cleaning, maintaining or keeping Batswana homes tidy and orderly. *Go kgapha* is using cow dung to smear the floor and making beautiful patterns. Everybody who enters the front courtyard of a Motswana house that is decorated in this way feels the homely and relaxing environment of a real *lolwapa la Setswana*. Raditladi depicts *bosiela* as a disaster that demolishes the décor and spoils the fun.

Another striking example of cultural entrenchment in Raditladi's poetry is evidenced by the use of an untranslatable concept derived from the root – *tsetse* in the words (*botsetse/lotsetse/motsetse*), which has fundamental intricacies in Setswana custom in particular, and African convention in general. The following examples enlighten this assertion lucidly:

Thamalakane kgomo ya lotsetse (1961:22)

[Thamalakane, the cow that has calved]

As has already been noted in chapter three, the poet compares the river with the cow that has just calved. *Thamalakane* brings happiness to people, providing

them with water that they use for cooking, washing and drinking just like *kgomo ya letsetse* does. He again refers to *Lewatle* as:

... *khunwana ya lotsetse* (1961:23)

Is like a nursing red-brown cow

When Isang a Lentšwe was in exile, he is compared with *kgomo ya lotsetse*:

Mašwi a yona a tla tlhoka go gamelwa gae

Go gorisa basadi le basimane (1961:40)

It needs to come home for milking

To feed women and children

As already mentioned, *Kgomo ya letsetse* is very essential to the family. It has just added another member to the kraal, increasing the number of cattle in the kraal. As *lotsetse*, it produces the first milk after calving, a delicacy to boys known as *kgatsele*. According to Setswana tradition, the real purpose of the cattle exchange between prospective in-laws in *bogadi* was an affirmation of the spirit of promoting extension of blood relations between families. The groom's and the bride's family exchanged cattle and other gifts. It is not only the bride's family that receives gifts from the groom. The groom's family also receives gifts from the bride. These are symbols of friendship and new relationships between the in-laws. The bride's father ensures that his daughter will be well catered for in her new home. To this end, he offers the groom a cow so that he can look after his daughter and his grandchildren. After conceiving the first child, the wife will go back home to give birth to a baby. Her maternal grandmother will serve as a mid-wife and look after her immediately after giving birth to a baby. The process is known as *go baya botsetse*. When she goes back home, her father-in-law will give her a nursing cow, *lotsetse*, which will provide milk for the new mother. Hence Raditladi articulates that the cow should come home to feed the women

and children. Therefore *lotsetse* plays a significant part, especially during the process of *botsetse*.

Plaatje's Setswana version of *The King's Judgement*, intimated in the introduction to this chapter, the word "*Motsetse*" (Plaatje, 2007:15) appears once and refers to a woman in seclusion after giving birth. There is no real equivalent in the English culture; hence Plaatje translates it simply as "Mother." This bears out Bhabha's assertion that "the content of a cultural tradition is being overwhelmed, or alienated in the act of translation" and that "the foreign element 'destroys the original's structures of reference and sense communication as well' not simply by negating it but by negotiating the disjunction in which successive cultural temporalities are preserved in the work of history and at the same time cancelled." (1994:227–8). We suggest with Bhabha that "culture as an enactive, enunciatory site opens up possibilities for other 'times' of cultural meaning" in our case, retroactive (Bhabha, 1994:178). "*Botsetse*" refers to the Setswana custom whereby a woman was secluded in the house for a time after giving birth (Malefo in Rantao 1993/4:56). A small stick was placed in front of the door (ibid) / cross poles in front of the hut (Schapera 1948:234) to let people know that only the midwife and those caring for the mother and baby were allowed to enter. In times past, an ox or a goat was sacrificed if the parents or parents-in-law were full of expectations for the child (ibid; Schapera 1948:234). The woman in seclusion drank a clear consommé made with the water in which the meat had been cooked (Malefo in Rantao 1993/4:56). After two or three weeks, when the baby's umbilical cord had dried up and fell off, it was buried in the yard (ibid). This is done to establish a bond between a person and the soil of the land of his birth. Phankga the protagonist in Mminele's novel signifies the importance of the child of the soil, *ngwana wa mmu* , by saying:

Mošomo wa go ba hlogo ya sekolo se ke wa ka, o ntshwanetše. Ke wa ka – Tau gare ga Ditau – Ngwana wa mobu wo, gare ga bana ba mobu wo. Ge ke be ke

sale maleng a mme, mme o be a fela a monoka mobu wo go ntiisa ka wona. Ge ke belegwa, lentšu la ka la mathomo le kwelwe ke mobu wo, gomme ba nhlapiša ka meetse ao a elago mo mobung wo. Ke godišitšwe ke eng ge e se dijo tsa mobu wo? Ke hlalefišitšwe ke eng ge e se kgati ya mobu wo? – Bjale sekolo se se swanetse go hlahlwa ke mang ge e se ngwana wa mobu wo? Ke mang? Ke nna (1972:19–20).

The position of principal in this school ought to be mine. It is mine – A lion among lions – child of this soil, among children of this soil. When I was still in my mother's womb, my mother used to lick this soil to strengthen me with this soil. When I was born, my first word was heard by this soil, I bathe with water flowing on this soil. How was I brought up if not by food coming from this soil? Where did I get my wisdom if not by a rod plucked from this soil? So who is supposed to lead this school if not the child of this soil? Who is the child of the soil? It is me.

In Batswana, it is believed that at the end of one's life one must return to where the umbilical cord has been laid, to die and become an ancestor. Hence a person is truly "*ngwana wa mmu*" a "child of the soil."

A translation, as viewed by Bhabha, is partial re-presentation. He cites Benjamin's well-known passage that likens an original and its translation to "the broken fragments of the greater language, just as fragments are the broken parts of a vessel" (Bhabha 1994:170). That greater language, when it comes to cultures, suggests the shared human identity we posit as permitting the pedagogical possibilities of "the in-between space". To intervene in the present, "to be part of a revisionary time," according to Bhabha, "is to reinscribe our human, historic commonality" (ibid: 7).

Out of respect for our African material and our African learners, and in keeping with the Afrocentric quest for methodological approaches that contribute to

decolonization, we have presented theoretical constructs, hybridity, negotiation and translation which intuitively, emotionally and creatively underpin, guide and inform our interpretation of the Setswana story through poetry.

6.7 Teaching for cultural relevance and restoration: The care and Education of children learning from poetry and story

In this section of the study, we model teaching for cultural relevance and restoration through language, poetry, story, proverb, history, cultural norms and values, citing ideas and suggestions from Raditladi. Language, poetry, culture, history, proverbs and stories are intertwined and indivisible, bearing out the traditional African philosophy of holism, the interconnectedness of all things. Language, culture, proverbs and stories derive from one source, life itself. Life, if you will, is the schoolroom. *Moletsane harangue* that:

Poetry is an expression of feelings and presentation of experiences. It is patterned eloquent speech that draws listeners to the world of the poet. Poetry is also related to other genres such as folk-stories, folk-song and drama (1983:1).

For educational purposes, this study will look at the allusions and images in Raditladi's poetry, how such citations and echoes and/or allusions relate to folk-stories, as well as their educational value.

People who respect and learn their language, learn their culture as well, because language is a key component and carrier of culture. Raditladi could have chosen to write in English, but he was aware that writing in Setswana was significant to his language.

Okot p' Bitek opines that:

African writers who choose English or French set themselves certain problems. They wish to express African ideas, but they have chosen a non-African tool to express them. There is a grave danger that with the tool of language they will borrow other foreign things. Every language has

its own stock of common images expressing a certain people's way of looking at things. Every language has its own set of literary forms which limit a writer's manner of expression. How many of these tools can a writer borrow before his African ideas are affected by the influence of foreign ideas implied in them? (1972:1).

Poetry is therefore a medium for transmitting beliefs and values present in the culture of Setswana speakers, as could be discerned in Raditladi. In another illustration, Raditladi' shows that he is a cultural aficionado by employing proverbs to expand the meaning of images in his poetry. He is illuminating his own story through the medium of poetry. The following examples enlighten this assertion lucidly:

Ba mpopela kgomo ya mmopa, **ya lela**,
Namane ya yone ka ba ka e kotela (1961:8)

*They constructed a clay cow, and it lowed
I ended up being its calf-boy*

Ya phunya mogodu **wa lesea tharing** (1961:42)
Tearing a baby's stomach in the womb

A tsena **mo tharing** ya tshepe e sa segwa (1961:37)
He dressed himself with springbok hide

In Setswana there is a proverb that says *ngwana yo o sa leleng o swela tharing* meaning that the child who does not cry, dies in the cradle. The lines quoted from Raditladi's poems above have words such as "*a lela; wa lesea mo tharing ; and mo tharing*). Traditionally the Batswana believed in witchcraft, as articulated in the story, entitled *Ngwana O Sa Leleng* (The child who does not cry.):

...rrangwana a re baloi, ditaba, magodu le baba botlhe ba ba re tsomang ba tla utlwa ngwana yo. Go ka nna botoka thata fa ngwana a sa lele, ka gonne fa re sa ntse re ilela ngwana ga re ka ke ra palama setlhare.

... the father had a fear that witches, beasts of prey, thieves and all enemies pursuing them would hear the child. It would be much better, he said, if the child didn't cry because while they are still in that period of protecting the newborn, they shouldn't expose him to any kind of danger.

Tragically, in this story, things are arranged so that the baby does not cry, then he falls ill and dies in the cradle on his mother's back. Because he does not cry, no one, not even his mother is aware of his plight, and he dies alone. The literal meaning of the proverb that the story illustrates, however, is less important than the analogous meaning it is understood to have by the Batswana. *Ngwana yo o sa leleng, o swela tharing* (The child who doesn't cry dies in the cradle) means that if you have a problem or are in some kind of trouble, speak up, talk to people, so that you can receive the help you need. Do not keep things inside, withdraw, or bear your pain alone; ask for help, seek advice, accept comfort from others. It is a very practical life lesson, and fits with the communally reassuring social structures of traditional Africa and the value of inclusiveness. Too often we feel pain, shame or stigma associated with whatever we are facing. However, the problems we face are always human problems shared by others. By opening up, we find that others have faced similar situations and come through. By asking, we are helped in constructive ways to handle our physical, emotional or spiritual pain. We find support in community, especially in that community where one person's pain is the pain of all.

The story can teach not only about culture, but also about language. The word *thari*, for example, translated “cradle” refers to a sheep or calf skin traditionally tied around the mother to carry the baby on her back. Today, the Batswana and African mothers who continue the practice typically use a cloth or a towel. *Thari* also has a number of related analogous uses for example, *thari e atile* means to have many children, while *go tlhoka thari* means to be barren, and *lethari* refers to a young girl of childbearing or marriageable age. It is more polite to say *go tlhoka thari* rather than *tlhoka bana*.

In his poem *Motlhokagae*, Raditladi is indeed crying, so that he should not die in his mother’s cradle. He uses imagery to communicate his inner feelings, which are boiling; feelings of sadness, frustration and disappointment. He also exploits poetic licence to accuse Tshekedi of being awful and untruthful:

Lo bule ditsebe ke tla bula lotlole
Ke tla duma jaaka sekgwana sa phefo
Ke kurutla jaaka diphuka tsa phofo

Open your ears and I will open up my chest
 I will echo like wind going through a hole
 And clatter like wings of a bird

Because of the injustice that was done to him, Raditladi wanted to vent his frustration and anger at Tshekedi. He was not prepared to stop telling the whole world about it. This is indicated in the use of the words *duma* and *kurutla*, which shows that he was going to make a noise like the wings of a bird and the sound of wind as it blows over the small hole of a bottle. He continues to elucidate the depth of his sorrow by saying:

Pelo ya me ka ba ka utlwa e uba

I even felt my heart beat

This illustrates the severity of the pain in his heart. He tried to defend himself attesting his innocence, but the tribe turned against him; there were no sympathizers. He declares his innocence by saying:

Ke supa fa di le phepa, tsa me diatla,

I proclaim that my hands are clean

He became a sojourner, moving from one village to the next. He was always on the way to an unknown destination. He did not have anything to eat except gums from trees. He ended up living far away from home, where he could not be reached physically:

Fa lo ntshwara lo ka ditaya mogala

Fa lo ka roma pitse yona e tla tlhela

I can only be reached telephonically

On horseback you may not reach me

People will never reach him even if they use horses as a mode of transport. People can only contact him telephonically. He further gives an account of the harsh conditions he was facing:

Ke le makgasa le ditlhale mmeding,

Le bata tsa borokgwe ke sa di rokwa.

**My clothes were tattered and ruined
Patches of my trousers were not stitched**

Raditladi's misery is shared by another American poet who echoes similar experiences of being homeless.

He wants to die

He wonders along in his tattered rags

Clothes which were once good, even expensive,

He did buy them.

Some were given to him, some he stole.

He stole them on the street and in the store.

He has a house but house is no home.

Yes there's a door some windows a roof

A porch some steps all in disrepair. (Elmer Andrew Cohen: Wikipedia)

Elmer Andrew Cohen's poem sums up the feeling of Raditladi. As a learned man with a university education, a member of the royal family whose father was very wealthy, it was very difficult thing to see himself in such a state, especially as his dream was to further his studies abroad (as hinted at by one of the respondents, who was interviewed). His dreams were shattered and his aspirations obliterated. The clothes he wore represent his broken heart and his overpowered spirit. He brings his lament to a close by saying:

Fa dinaledi tsa godimo di ka nkgoa

Moya wa me wa goletsegela marung

Mme wa tlogela mmele wa me o le moko

Tsayang nama ya me lo ko lo e tsenye mmung

Lo re: Yo legae o le bonye mo lošong,

O tšhwana fela le moswela Tebele

Ka moswela ga gabo ga a jewe mmele

If the stars of the heavens can call my name
 If my spirit can rise up to the clouds
 And leave my body as an empty heap
 Put my corpse into the grave
 And say: He found his real home in death
 He is like a person who dies in foreign land
 For a person who dies at home is not edible

Raditladi expresses his thoughts as if he is about to die. He articulates his disappointment about his fate on earth. He is asking his people who failed to support him while he was alive to give him a dignified funeral. He is also requesting his people to tell the world about his life, his suffering *Yo legae o le bone lošong*. Here Raditladi employs oxymoron; that is two contrasting words in the same line. *Legae* means home, where parents, brothers and sisters are. *Legae* represents love, protection, safety, security, sanctuary and shelter. *Loso* on the other hand symbolise loss and demise. In death, people are lonely and abandoned. One immediately thinks of Milton's popular poem *Paradise Lost*, which deals with Christ's temptation by Satan in the wilderness. The overall idea is that just as paradise was lost because Adam and Eve yielded to Satan's temptation, it was regained for mankind, at least as a possibility, because Christ refused to yield to temptation.

This extract (lines 267 to 309 of Book III) is taken from the best-known stretch of the poem, where Satan has taken Christ up to a high mountain to show him the kingdoms of the earth. The voice here is Satan's, and we are looking eastwards, over present-day Iraq, Iran, Arabia, and the near parts of Central Asia as they were in Christ's time, when the two great powers of the region were Rome and the Parthian Empire established by Mithridates I in the middle second century B.C.

Like Milton, Raditladi uses the image of life and death in this phrase. Milton declares that paradise was lost and found upon a time in history. Raditladi is making a wish to find a real home in heaven because he did not have a pleasant time on earth. As he was living in agony on earth (lost) he embraces death as a medicine that will replenish his spirit. Even though he dies in a foreign land, he prays that his soul should rest in peace. He has succumbed to defeat on this earth and sees his last hope in death.

By giving his side of the story, Raditladi will never die in the cradle. He has relieved himself of a yoke that was tight around his neck for many years. By expressing his feelings, he refuses to give in to life.

Among the Batswana or African people in general, the first lesson people get when they are still small is the importance of gratitude. The norm of giving thanks inculcated in Africans early in life, which they do not show with words but by clapping their cupped hands. The phrase “*ke leboga ka a mabedi*” is used to say thank you and which derives from this symbolic hand action. The sense of gratitude is prevalent in literature:

Legodimo lo ka bo ruri le le gaufi

Ke kabo ke agela Kgosi Kgama ntlwana

Ke re, ntlwana ya gago e gone, morena

Mogope o gone gorogela morafe

I wish the heavens were nearer

I was going to build a tombstone for Kgama

And say, your home is in heaven, my lord

There is food for your people' sake

Raditladi is thanking Kgama for being such a benevolent person. He is making his wish vividly clear. He wishes the heavens were near so that he could build a

house for Kgama. Raditladi aspires to bestow honour on Kgama by building a sanctuary for him in heaven. Here Raditladi elevates Kgama's dignity and integrity to the highest level as already stated in chapter four. He would like to do this to show his gratitude and appreciation for all the good things Kgama has done for his people. This image is ingested with insinuations of a story "*Lorato*" in Plaatje's collection of modern stories.

Lorato (Love Conquers All) illustrates the value of gratitude, as expressed by one's deeds. At first the two brothers in this story feel that the mother does not love them equally. As they mature they come to understand and feel the power of the mother's love. Leaving home, they find jobs and become independent adults, then:

E ne e re kgwedi e fedile ba bo ba ya gae ba isetsa mmaabona dijo le go ya go tlhola gore a o sa tshetse sentle. Basimane ba, ba ne ba le matlhagatlhaga mo e bileng ba bona tlhatloso kwa ba ne ba dira teng. Mme ka boitumelo ba ya gae ba fitlha ba direla Mmaabona moletlo o mo tona wa maleboga, ba laletsa batho ba le bantsi. Ga nna monate mme morago ga moletlo ba agela mmaabo ntlo e tona.

Every month end they would go home and take their mother food and make sure that she was doing well. These boys were so industrious that they were soon promoted at work. They went home full of joy and threw a big feast for their mother to say thank you. They invited a lot of people and it was a wonderful occasion. Shortly thereafter, they built a very big house for their mother.

The story teaches one of the simplest yet most profound life lessons, namely, that it is in giving that we truly live and make the world a better place. In this story, the value of the mother's love, the norm of giving thanks as well as the norm of showing respect for elders, comes to the fore. It is by acknowledging the role that parents, and other adults such as teachers and mentors, have played in one's

achievements that one remains humble and grounded. As the Setswana proverb goes: "*Motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe*" (I am a person through others) meaning that we coexist and are interdependent. "My being and meaning in the world can only be fulfilled by the being of the other" (Matjila, 1996). This group existence, a fundamental pillar of Batswana society, is a value shared by other black South African cultures.

Raditladi is grateful for Kgama III's achievements. He is showing appreciation by expressing his feelings in poetry. Poetry was and is still the most powerful medium of communication. It is a sign of *botho/ubuntu* to be grateful if people take care of you. Kgama III was like a good mother to his nation. Just like the mother in the story of *Lorato*, Kgama was a mother and father, teacher, and mentor to the nation. Raditladi recognises the role he played in the achievements of his kingdom. He is also grateful for his humility and modest personality. This will teach human beings to be selfless and altruistic.

As was found in the preceding sentence, Raditladi admired noble and gallant people, so we learn from the following extract that he despises arrogant and egotistical people. He believes that people should be meek and respectful, as this embodies *botho*. In his poem *Ntwa ya 1939–45* he says:

1. *Hitlara re kile ra utlwa a ipolela*
2. *A re ke tladi e kileng ya tshosa ditšhaba*
3. *Le basadi ya ba tlholela go lela*
4. *Rona ra re phenyo ka matlho o tla e leba*
5. *Ka diatla gone ga a na go e tshwara*
6. *Majeremane ba roroma diphara*

We heard Hitler boasting about his military
 That he is the lightning that frighten nations
 And forebode mourning for women
 We told him he would indeed see victory
 But he won't be able to handle victory
 The Germans buttocks started to shiver

Raditladi describes Hitler as a tyrant who kills, terrorises, slaughters, terrifies, bullies and intimidates people. Hitler was the Chancellor of Germany at the beginning of the Second World War. In his poem, Raditladi describes Hitler as a cruel monster who was blood-thirsty, who enjoyed causing pain and sorrow, destroying families and butchering all those he felt were his enemies. According to the poem, all these things were done by Hitler to satisfy his greed and love for power. Hitler was merciless and cruel. He did not spare anything or anybody in his invasions. Hitler thought he was untouchable, that no one would ever defeat him. Hitler was also boastful about his military prowess. He made pronouncements that no foe would ever touch the German soil. As is always the case, self-righteous people reap what they sow in life.

A traditional story entitled *Letlapa le Basetsana* (The stone and the girls) brings out the value of treating others well and maintaining harmony in social interactions. The story goes:

Ga twe e rile e le basetsana ba bararo, ba ne ba ile kgonnyeng. Yo mongwe a kgopiwa ke letlapa fa ba le mo tseleng go ya kgonnyeng ke fa a roga letlapa. Fa ba sena go rwalela ba boela gae. Mme ba boa ka tsela e ba tlileng ka yona. Letlapa le ne la gogomoga, la nna legolo. Basetsana ba tlhoka fa ba kgabaganyang teng.

Once upon a time there were three girls who went to fetch firewood. On their way one of them tripped on a stone and she swore at the stone. After collecting the firewood they went back home. They returned using the same road by which they had come. The stone swelled up, it became bigger and bigger until the girls had no way to pass.

The girls sing a song to plead with the stone, which makes room for them to pass, however, the stone still blocks the child who insulted it. After the group of girls returned home and told the father about the predicament the unkind child was in, he goes to help her. Only after he threatens to leave her behind does she admit to what she has done, and the stone lets them both pass. The story concludes that the girl went through a ritual cleansing. In Batswana culture, where a person is considered a spiritual being, it is believed that only a ritual, spiritual cleansing can heal a person after an emotional experience. In this story, what the girl had done was not in line with *botho* (humanity) and she needed to learn to live in harmony with others. Moreover she needed to learn that “honesty is the best policy”. Instilling an ethical value and appropriate behaviour in social intercourse, the ritual aimed to mould and chisel character. As one Westerner observed with regard to the remarkable social amenities of Africans: “Those who have had the privilege of sharing life with African people can hardly fail to recognize the extraordinary level of social intelligence they display in their interactions (Fugelsang & Chandler, as cited in Pradervand 1989:208).

Repeatedly, these Setswana stories foreground the benefits of obedience and the consequences of disobedience to parents and elders. Traditionally, the behaviour of children was regulated through the larger community. A child was expected to treat any adult his parents’ age with the same obedience. An elder was expected to reprimand any a child doing wrong. In African cultures generally, every woman one's mother’s age must be treated as one's mother and every

man one's father's age as one's father. Any adult one's parent's age may correct and punish one. If one complains at home, one risks a second punishment. As the saying goes "It takes a village to raise a child". A Setswana proverb says: *Ngwana lekuka o a sokelwa* meaning "A child is like a milk-sack that must be watched vigilantly". M.O.M. Seboni explicates the proverb to mean that *Ngwana wa Setswana sa maloba o ne a tlotlile mogolo mongwe le mongwe ka ntlha ya ngwao ya Setswana* a Motswana child of yesteryear was respectful to all elderly people because of the Setswana lore that expects every child to be submissive and obedient to seniors (1962:157).

In Raditladi's poem, Hitler was defeated together with his allies. He escaped and even now no one knows where he has gone. It is assumed that he committed suicide, but there is no convincing evidence given to this effect. Germany suffered as a result of his reckless attitude. She was divided into East and West Germany and this weakened her power and influence. Her economy was severely affected by the terms of the treaty. The event serves as a good lesson to over-ambitious leaders whose arrogance has no place in the human race. The message of the poem is loud and clear to all powers in the world that we need to live in harmony. Hitler in real life and the girl as a protagonist in the story have similar characteristics of arrogance and haughtiness and they both paid a big price for their actions.

Raditladi's general feeling about merciless and vindictive leaders as opposed to caring and compassionate ones is visible in two of his poems, namely, *Kgosi Tšhaka* and *Kgosi Kgama*. *Kgosi Tšhaka* is a historical poem. As already mentioned in the introduction, the poem is based on Shaka's history. It has been recorded that Shaka had built the Zulu into a great warlike nation and unleashed waves of destruction that left enormous stretches of country uninhabited by people. The *Mfekane* unleashed by Shaka led to the annihilation of hundreds of tribes. Known as "*the Black Napoleon*", Shaka soaked southern Africa in blood, devastating countless kraals, particularly between 1820 and 1824.

Tšhaka ya rema dikgata tsa batho
Ya phunya mogodu wa lesea tharing

The spear crushed people's skulls
It pierced babies' stomachs in the womb

Here Raditladi describes some of the most horrifying scenes in the history of South Africa. The use of the words *rema dikgata* and *phunya mogodu* symbolise vicious and ruthless acts. To crush a skull is a callous act that can only be carried out by a heartless person. Raditladi epitomizes Shaka as being spiteful and merciless. He ruled with a heavy hand and his behaviour was bizarre. A person who kills a pregnant woman as well as an unborn child in the womb is dreadful.

Ya runa letsetse le nta moriring

Demolishing lice and fleas in the hair

Raditladi has employed the figure of speech, hyperbole, to amplify the ruthless deeds carried out by Shaka who left no stone unturned in his mission to conquer and subject people under his kingdom. This image ties in very well with Raditladi's message in his poem *Tshwanologo* as mentioned earlier in chapter one. Raditladi gave a clear message to Africans to be proud of whom they are, and not imitate other nations. It is said in the introduction and was corroborated by the respondents that Raditladi was very eloquent in English. Being one of the few educated people of his time, yet choosing to write in a language of the people, speaks volumes of the kind of person he was. Many of his peers wrote in English and other colonial languages, claiming that they wanted to reach a broader community. His works were proof that he was practising what he was preaching.

Raditladi' use of images, even though exaggerated, depicts the kind of person Shaka was. The ruthlessness in which he carried out his campaigns and his disciplinary actions to people, who disobeyed him, puts him on par with the Idi Amini's of this world.

In contrast to Shaka's terror, were Kgosi Kgama and Moshweshwe who were congenial figures. Kunene observes that when it comes to praising heroes, the poet becomes descriptive. "... the poet praises a fictitious hero for equally fictitious deeds of bravery ... he praises a man who is outstanding in the field of politics ... for this reason, is a metaphorical warrior in a metaphorical battle"(1971:17).

Kgama is like still water, he is calm, gentle, kind and humane. He is equated to *metsi a sediba*.

Kgosi wena le Mošwešwe lo a lekana

Kgosi you and Mošwešwe are equal

Moshweshwe is regarded as a remarkable leader, who was a superior military tactician and was able to unite several small groups into the Sotho nation. He won protectorate status from Britain in 1868, maintaining the autonomy of the Sotho. Moshoeshoe is considered the founding father of modern Lesotho.

In relation to the above, there is a story about honour and dishonour, reverence and contempt, trepidation and equanimity which can be equated to good and evil characters in Raditladi's poetry.

In a story, entitled *Mosidi le Mosadimogolo* (Mosidi and the old woman), Mosidi sets out to find work and her mother is anxious because her destination is a place known to be inhabited by ogres. When Mosidi reaches the place, she meets an old woman who asks her to lick her festering sores, promising to

reciprocate by protecting Mosidi from the ogres. Mosidi responds with humility and compassion. The empathy and feeling she exhibits as well as obedience to an elder who could be her grandmother's age, is rewarded, not just in terms of safety but she receives many beautiful gifts from the old woman. By contrast, when Mosidi's sister, desirous of getting the same beautiful things, arrives, she treats the old woman with contempt:

...mme mosadimogolo a mo raya a re a mo gore dintho gore a kgone go mo sireletsa mo go bodimo. A mo leba ka go nyatsa go gora dintho. A mo raya a re ke go gore dintho. A mo raya a re ke go gore dintho di bodile mmele jaana.

... the old woman ... asked her to lick her sores so that she would protect her from the ogres. The sister scowled at her and refused. "Must I wash your festering sores?" she said.

Feeling empathy and compassion and embodying humility and respect – are values that are key to a meaningful life fulfilled in living for others. Respect and obedience go hand in hand. Disrespect of one's elders leads down the wrong paths in life, as illustrated in a story entitled *Maitseo* (Behaviour), where it is related that:

Modise o ne a na le ditsala tse di tshwanang le ena ka mokgwa, ba tlhole ba biditse batho ba mo motseng. Modise e ne e le seganana le fa e bile mmaagwe a mo eletsa jang o ne a beile mo go reng ga a kgathale ka jalo ga a kitla a kgaogana le ditsala tsa gagwe.

Modise had friends who were ill-mannered and badly behaved like himself; they would fight with the people in the village. Modise was disobedient, and even when his mother tried to give him advice, he

made it clear that he did not care and did not intend parting company with his friends.

In this particular story, Modise, who refuses to listen to his mother, goes to jail after committing a robbery. The mother resolves not to assist in freeing her son from jail:

O ne a dira se ka go mo ruta gore ngwana yo o sa reetseng molao wa batsadi o reetsa wa manong.

She did so to teach him that a child who does not heed his parents will live by the law of the jungle.

This also applies to Kgosi Shaka who ruled by the sword and died by the sword. Shaka was murdered by his two half-brothers, Dingane and Mhlangana, at kwaDukuza on 24 September 1828. Dingane assumed the throne.

Shaka's last words took on a prophetic mantle. Popular South African/Zulu myth has him telling Dingane and Mhlangana that it is not they who will rule the Zulu nation, but "*white people who will come up from the sea*". However, the version that is probably the truest rendition, comes from Mkebeni kaDabulamanzi, King Cetshwayo's nephew and grandson of King Mpande (another half-brother to Shaka) – "*Are you stabbing me, kings of the earth? You will come to an end through killing one another*" (Wikipedia-Encyclopedia).

Another example that portrays Raditladi's cultural oeuvre, is the lines from the poem *Tau*. In this poem Raditladi signifies the importance of *bogwera*, (traditional school for boys) in this way:

*Ke nna mathule yo o mokokoto o thupa
Ga ke latwe ke mosimane a sa rupa*

I am the hammer that knocks like a rod
I can't be hunted by an uninitiated boy

Initiation plays a significant role in the life of the Batswana. Boys and girls are initiated at a traditional school where the graduates are recognized as grown men and women in the society. It was a long and arduous process starting at puberty and lasting for three years before the final intensive period of between two and six months training in the *Mophato* (initiation school). One aspect of the initiation period was an intensification of the training of the girls in the home. It was communal in nature, being done in groups according to age. The whole community took the initiative and decided on what direction the initiation would take. The young men, still spent much time with the cattle but, as senior herd-boys, they could attend communal talks by the *kgotla* (tribal assembly) of the *morafe* (community), gather firewood for some of the feasts, catch stray cattle which destroyed the crops, and weed the chief's fields. A boy attending the *mophato* may be called to *kgotla* to be whipped for a flimsy reason, such as not being respectful to a senior, or having warded off a blow when his father or his uncle wanted to punish him physically. The thrashing was often done with lashes which they themselves had plucked from the trees. *Le ojwa le sa le metsi* (bend the twig while it is steel green or spare the rod and spoil the child) was an often quoted adage.

Obedience was valued traditionally and inculcated and enforced in the initiation schools. Their primary purpose was to assist in the passage from the status of *bašwa* (minor) to *botho* (adulthood) and to prepare young people physically for the world of work and sexually for marriage. It also instilled in these new members of society their social responsibilities and duties, which is a far cry from today's emphasis in civil society on one's social rights.

Initiation schools taught love and respect for nature; young people also learned how to compose and perform praise poetry. Today, we tend to think of initiation schools only in terms of the controversial practice of circumcision. This is one of

the distortions of African cultures in which missionaries were complicit in considering initiation rites among the Batswana as indoctrinating children "in all that is filthy ... deceitful ... unrighteous ... blasphemous and soul-destroying." (Ludorf in Comaroff & Comaroff, 1991:315).

The same image is used by Mothoagae (1990:22) in his poem *Keledi tsa Motlhotlho*, when he says:

*Nna ngwale ke tshwarwe ka letsele
Ke tshwarwe ka letsele ke mosimane a sa rupa*

**I the initiate cannot be caressed on the breast
I cannot be caressed by an uninitiated boy.**

The image of initiated girls and boys portrays their responsibility, accountability and maturity. Graduates of initiation schools are ready to take on the challenges of life. The word *go rupa* (to initiate), derived from the noun *thupa* (stick). There is a Setswana proverb *Molao go tsena wa thupa*, meaning people take their task seriously when there is strict discipline. At the initiation, corporal punishment is the order of the day (Matjila, 1996:79).

Both Raditladi and Mothoagae use the image "uninitiated" to depict diverse scenarios. Raditladi's image portrays the lion, one of the strongest and most feared animals. The lion admits that only an initiated man can come face to face with it. This is because at the initiation school, boys undergo intensive training. They get taught how to hunt animals; even the most feared beasts such as the lion, the leopard and the cheetah. A *kgosi* wore a lion skin, and was expected to get that skin personally from a lion. In African literature, we read about fictional heroes, such as Mokwena and Shaka Zulu, who killed lions with their spears. Boys who have never been to an initiation school, do not know the strategies and

tactics used to kill a beast. As a result men, who have never been to an initiation school, are not man enough because they will not be able to protect their families and communities against dangerous beasts.

Mothoagae uses the image of an uninitiated boy allegorically to depict the misery that is brought about by the abuse of liquor. Mothoagae describes liquor as a poisonous staff that destroys peoples lives. Ngwale is a girl who is of marriageable age, who has just graduated from *bojale* (girl's initiation school). A girl of her status can receive a marriage proposal, but only by men who have been taught *koma* (big secrets of life). *Go tshwara ka letsele* means to propose love to a girl. In Setswana as well as other African cultures, one cannot propose love and marriage to a person who belongs to an older age-set or regimen. It is a sign of disrespect to do so.

There is an intertextual relationship between the two texts. Mothoagae's most recent text may have borrowed this image from Raditladi's text or any other source for that matter. Mothoagae allegorizes liquor to represent a female initiate. The meaning of this symbolism is that liquor is dangerous to children. Raditladi's text also gains more meaning from Mothoagae's image. This process is referred to as parasite:host and host:parasite in literature. It means that two texts have a reciprocal relationship. The second text borrows the image from the first text and the second text expands on the meaning of the first text. This cultural image can be used to demonstrate the relevance of tradition now and then.

Socially *mophato* separates youths from the life of childhood and brings them to the threshold of adulthood. It conditions them emotionally to the mores of the group and moulds them into unified age-sets. It strengthens the authority of government by imparting social values, a proper respect for elders, faithfulness in observing taboos and the rules of conduct in all relationships. At the same time, it introduces them to the supreme right of adults – that of communicating direct with *badimo* who plays such an integral part in their lives. In contrast, a man who has

not been initiated is a perpetual boy – *mosimane* and the woman – *lethisa*. In the past, no such one could marry, nor partake in the councils of men and women. Uninitiated men were spurned by women as incomplete beings and uninitiated women were despised by men and other women (Setiloane 1976: 38).

Raditladi and other Setswana poets illustrate the essence of education that is missing in the present curriculum. By adopting the Western philosophy of education and relegating their traditional education to the lowest domain, the Africans have committed suicide. Raditladi's images show the advantages of the traditional African school that did not only concentrate on the intellectual development of the learners. His poetry shows that African traditional education also focussed on the social, cultural, economic, biological, historical, psychological and humanistic aspect. The images Raditladi uses, demonstrate that the principal aim of education was to produce a good human being, able and willing to advance the course of the human spirit.

Raditladi farther expresses the Batswana's technological expertise and knowledge of sustainable development in the following lines:

Motlhabani (A soldier)

Phate ya kgongwana o ne a sa e bewa

He was not wrapped in a cow skin

It was indicated earlier in the introduction that a cow was *Motswana* (real god). After the death of a person, he/she is wrapped in a cow's skin. In Batswana custom, death, mourning, and widowhood call for ritual cleansings. Among the Batswana, if a married man or woman dies, there are certain rituals to be followed by the surviving spouse. Immediately after a husband passes on, the wife is bound to stay in the bedroom. A mattress is placed on the floor, and people coming to comfort the bereaved sit down next to the mattress. The widow

or those who give her support, usually grandmothers who are close relatives, explain to the visitors the cause of death. At this stage, the widow is said to be ceremonially unclean owing to the death of her husband, and is forbidden to travel or mix socially (in Setswana, she is called *sefifi*). She will wear a black dress until the end of the mourning; either the following spring or for twelve months. The first time a widow ventures out of her house into public places, even if it is just to go and fetch water, she carries a *shokgwe* an onion like, bulbous root, the scales of which she unobtrusively drops as she goes on her way, but especially at the cross-roads. The significance of this practice serves to exorcise bad luck. She avoids cattle kraals, as her condition is believed to affect livestock disastrously. During the mourning period, a widow is not allowed to visit friends and if she visits family members, she must return before sunset (*a seke a phirimalwa ke letsatsi kwa ntle*). The observances and taboos surrounding a widow are especially stringent, even oppressive, and many modern Batswana women are attempting to do away with them, especially since they tend to reinforce a socially inferior status for women. Neither a widow nor a widower is permitted to have sexual intercourse with anyone until he/she has undergone ritual cleansing (*Go tlhatswa sesila*). If a person transgresses this taboo, it is said they will suffer from an illness that is caused by sleeping with a person who has *makgome* (filth of the deceased). This norm relates to morality and the respect of waiting a period before taking a new partner. It enacts respect for marriage as well as the surviving family of the deceased. The widow's mourning clothes (*thapo*) are ceremonially removed by the maternal uncle of the deceased husband, normally at the beginning of spring, when the whole family undergoes a cleansing ritual. According to Setswana culture, death brings *sesila* (uncleanliness) to those closely connected with the deceased, increasing with the closeness of the relationship. The spouse, parents, siblings and children wear *thapo* – a strip of plaited grass worn around the neck and, sometimes to indicate the bitterness of the loss, dipped in the gall of the animal slaughtered for the

burial. It is worn continuously and involves many taboos in personal relationships (Setiloane 1976:68–69)

During the mourning period the family shave their hair, change their clothing, cease all agricultural work, and abstain from customary activities, and if they are widows and widowers, they may not walk freely among other people. This practice in Setswana is called *go ikilela* (to put oneself in quarantine). There is also a Setswana proverb that says *Tswhenyana e bowa bo ntlha e a ikilela* (people should always respect traditional taboos and customs to be safe). They should always be guided by their conscience, and they have to uphold the moral values of the society. One disadvantage of having to uphold all cultural norms of society is that it did not allow people to think independently and challenge some of the practices. Creative minds were scorned as outcasts. The advantage of the practice was the harmony and unity among people living together.

Raditladi draws his images from cultural practices and uses them to create a knowledge base. In the following lines Raditladi observes:

***Baboki ba dikgosi* (Praises of Dikgosi)**

1. *Baboki ba dikgosi basenyi*
2. *Baboki ba rona balotlhanyi*
3. *Ba sotla ka dikgosi ba tshega*
4. *Ba re kgomo thokwana e a raga*
5. *Thokwana e ragile bagami*
6. *Banyana ba tsoga ba bopame* (Raditladi 1964:35)

Praisers of dikgosi are troublemakers
 Our praisers are sowers of dissension
 They mock at dikgosi whilst laughing
 They say Thokwana is a kicking cow

Thokwana kicks even the milk man

And makes children to starve

[Moloto's translation, 1969]

Here Raditladi uses satire, by alleging that the praisers of chiefs are agitators of conflict. Moloto refers to Raditladi's style here, as a poem upon a poem. By using poetry to criticize the poets, he himself becomes a critic of poetry. Raditladi, in the poem, disapproves of the way other poets dissect the character of chiefs. He rejects the notion of likening a chiefs' behaviour to that of whales.

Raditladi uses irony to accuse the poets. He is accusing chiefs of being manipulative, oppressive, domineering, tyrannical and unfair to their subjects. He says *dikgosi* should not ill-treat their subjects because one day they will be deposed and live among the commoners.

The folly and short-sightedness of the lure of modernity, which tends to value and elevate youth over age and maturity, is depicted in another story, entitled *Bogosi* (The chieftainship), by Sol Plaatje. Life is a delicate balance between extremes, good and evil, light and dark, young and old. The youth have new ideas, new abilities and possibilities, freshness and energy, but the need is for balance and the realisation that hard-earned, hard-learned lessons through many years of trial and error can temper the impetuosity of youth, give young people perspective, and channel their energies productively. In this story, after the misled youth yields to the temptation – in the form of a traveller who represents the outer, modern world – to kill all the elders and enthrone a young chief, they immediately find themselves with an insurmountable problem that only the wisdom, knowledge and experience of an old man can solve. Raditladi's poem *Isang a Lentšwe* outlines this kind of behaviour vividly:

Nnaa Kgomo ya Bakgatla ba e digetse kae?

Selelo sa yone se utlwala Mošomane

**Where did they banish the Bakgatla cow?
Its lowing is heard from Mošomane**

According to Morton and Ramsay (1987), between 1929 and 1940, the Kgatleng was a scene of disorder and quarrelling. Young Kgosi Molefi and his uncle, the ex-regent Isang a Lentšwe became arch-enemies, and the elders failed to restore harmony in the *Kgotla*. Protectorate officials, who wanted peace for the sake of efficient administration, intervened without success.

Molefi belonged to a new generation of young Batswana who felt out of place and at odds with colonial society. Young Molefi often turned his back on *bogosi* as built by his uncle, and devoted his energies instead to common entertainment – cars, drink, sport, women and entertaining his friends (1987:82).

For this reason, the old guard wanted Isang back home to continue his good works. Like the characters in the story of *Bogosi*, the Bakgatla exiled Isang to Mošomane; but at a later stage realised that they had blundered when all the important projects of *Morafe* came to a standstill.

This particular image in the poem as well as the particular story, explains the Setswana proverb: *letlhaku je lešwa le agelwa mo go le legologolo*, an image drawn from the traditional way of life, of maintaining the new fence around the old one. Literally, it refers to the practice of replacing old or broken stakes with fresh new thorn branches, placed alongside the existing branches. Thus the foundation of the fence remains intact and the new thorn gains strength from it. Figuratively, the proverb is understood by Setswana speakers to mean that young people should imbibe the wisdom, knowledge and experience of the elders while they are still alive. Wisdom in Batswana culture, as in other traditional cultures, is epitomized by an elder and wisdom is learned primarily in the schoolroom of life.

6.8 Conclusion

The chapter has only made a brief foray into the poetry, stories and proverbs, illustrating the kind of cultural relevance and restoration they embody and might teach. The space in between languages and cultures is pedagogically fertile, opening up new times of cultural meaning. In the researcher's analysis of the care and education of children, cultural norms and values begin by valuing the love of a mother, which sacrifices and takes risks for the sake of her offspring and traditionally, protects the newborn from the harsh outside world for a time, and carries him/her *mo tharing* (on her back). The education of children continues by instilling the values of saying "thank you", treating others well, living in harmony with others, and being honest. As language, poetry, stories, history and proverbs repeatedly demonstrate in the study, group existence is a fundamental pillar of Batswana society. Hence community, certainly in the past, regulated a child's behaviour and provided a social securing structure where people could turn and receive help with their problems but simultaneously, the community demanded respect for ones fellows, accountability, empathy and compassion.

Listening to and living in close community with elders was primarily how and where wisdom was to be learned, thus the ultimate aim and end of the care and education of children, as it emerges from the poetry and/or stories in poetry, is to grow and develop as a human being. "Values such as empathy, sharing, respect for the other, humanness, gentleness, hospitality and mutual acceptance in human interaction," which Mashige finds in folklore generally, and which were found here by the researcher, in particular, are humanistic values shared across cultures (2002:54) and which can be taught across cultures. Norms may differ across cultures and change within a culture over time. Values, however, are perennial and values mould and chisel the granite that is character (*botho*).

In the researcher's interpretation of selected Setswana stories, he moved between cultural norms and values (summarized in the previous paragraph), language, poetry, proverbs, and history, in acknowledgment of their inseparability from the African philosophy of interconnectedness. The theoretical construct of hybridity, drawn from the principles of negotiation and translation, has intuitively, imaginatively and emotionally informed the researcher's attempted "re-negotiation of Batswana cultural identity", in the present, and his "restoration of rhetorical agency" and "reformulation of obscured, dismissed and distorted histories" in this study. Language, for example, can be a restorative, teaching about the custom of *botsetse/motsetse* (seclusion of newborn and mother) practiced mostly in the past. Proverbs with their figurative language teach indirectly and sometimes by analogy, so that the proverb drawn from the traditional way of life *letlhaku je lešwa le agelwa mo go le legologolo*, encourages young people to learn and imbibe of the wisdom of the elders. As regards history, by undoing and redressing some of the distortions about initiation schools, the researcher alluded to the positive education provided by initiation schools, such as reinforcing values of obedience to and respect for elders as well as accountability to ones fellow-man. In the past language, and specifically mistranslation by outsiders from the hegemonic Western culture, contributed to egregious distortions, that resulted in affecting African cultures extremely negatively. Thus the researcher implicitly contributes to decolonizing the mind and conquering cultural contempt and restores dignity to Batswana culture in the present, taking care in translation, not to alienate the sensibilities of Western English speakers; "raw" language in particular, that is understood to be metaphoric in Setswana, might offend English eyes that read the language in these stories literally.

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² K. Haire and D.S. Matjila: The Pedagogical Potential of Setswana English Stories, *Alternation* 15(2) 2008

CHAPTER 7: Conflict, rivalry and fatality

7.1. Introduction

The intention of this chapter is to reflect on Raditladi's viewpoint towards conflict, rivalry and fatality. As indicated earlier, the significance of this research lies in its potential for restoring dignity and self-worth to Batswana culture, history, language and literature that have long been marginalized. This chapter will concentrate on the historical happenings of Africa and the world from Raditladi's perspective. The main focus will be on three poems, namely, *Ntwa ya 1939–1945*, *Motlhabani* and *Kgosi Shaka* as they represent world history, the fatalities of a struggle, and the history of South Africa respectively. In the poem *Ntwa ya 1939–45*, Raditladi gives a good account of an entanglement that affected the whole world and changed the social, economic and political landscape of the world. In *Motlhabani* he reflects on the terror and painful loss of life, whereas in *Kgosi Shaka*, he depicts the destruction, impairment and harm that was caused in the *Mfecane/Difecane* era, which set new boundaries and created new ethnic groupings in South Africa.

7.2. Ntwa ya 1939–1945 (The world conflict)

In a few years from now, the world will come together to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of World War 2. Many people will come from far and wide to give testimony about how the world was saved. The Western powers that participated in the war (UK, USA, France, Russia, Poland, Australia and some other countries in Europe) will pay their last respects to the soldiers who died in that Great War, and remember the other services that these liberators rendered in setting mankind free from oppression. The Axis powers (Germany and her allies) on the other hand, will be left to experience the shame of defeat. A leader

or two will appear on the world stage to apologize for the atrocities committed against a people during that dark era of world history.

When Hitler rolled his tanks into Prague on 15 March 1939, the African continent was under the control of the colonial overlords. Except for a few countries (Ethiopia and Liberia) most of the black man's world was controlled by some queen, king or government who ruled it as though it were their personal property and the fate of the people was theirs to determine. The war had both a positive and negative effect on Africa. This was not the first time that the colonies were called on to help get their masters out of their misadventures. Africans participated in the First World War (WW1), but their roles were limited to being porters and servants (only the white soldiers of South Africa saw combat). However, in World War 2 (WW2), African soldiers fought, killed, were killed, and received decorations for bravery, valour and other honourable conducts on the battle field. One might ask, "Where did these soldiers come from?" How was the white man able to mobilize troops from among a people whom centuries earlier he had called "apes", "savages" and "pagans"? (Kizito 2008; Robert 1992)

The answers can be found with our traditional rulers. The tribal chiefs gave permission for able-bodied young men in their domain to be recruited and conscripted for military service. This was also how the colonists mobilized the colonists in WWI. A Bugandan (Uganda) chieftain was quoted as having said: "A war against Britain is a war against Buganda ... I did all I could to recruit men for the armies ... I tried my best to get in touch with the British armies for I did not want the enemy to get to our city London". The basic difference between recruitments in the two wars was that conditions were better for the African soldier in WW2 than in WW1. He received a salary, better training on how to use weapons and survive, travelled to other continents, and interacted with other cultures who shared the same hatred for the colonial master (hence the first growls for independence). He learnt to assert himself and develop a sense of self

worth. In a nutshell, WW 2 "opened" his eyes to the world around him. The experiences of the African soldiers will reflect in years to come, as soldiers encouraged their people to send their children to school and receive the white man's education. Some of them went to school themselves, and were later in the forefront of the struggle for independence from the colonial masters (Kizito 2008; Robert 1992).

7.2.1 Poetry in motion

In this poem, Raditladi is delineating about the WW2. The poem outlines the event with Adolf Hitler as the protagonist. Raditladi describes Hitler as a tyrant who kills, terrorises, slaughters, terrifies, bullies and intimidates people. Hitler was the Chancellor of Germany at the beginning of WW2. In his poem, Raditladi describes Hitler as a cruel and blood-thirsty monster who enjoyed causing pain and sorrow, destroying families and butchering all those he felt were his enemies. According to the poem, all these things were done by Hitler to satisfy his greed and lust for power. Hitler was merciless and cruel. He did not spare anything or anybody in his invasions. Hitler thought he was untouchable and undefeatable.

Raditladi is presenting the one side of Adolf Hitler. He did not say anything about the attitudes of many Germans towards Hitler. Hitler was regarded by some Germans as a hero who was going to free Germany from the shackles of the Treaty of Versailles. To many Germans, the Congress of Versailles treated Germany unfairly and unjustly. They lost many territories including the Rhineland, the Saar Basin and provinces such as Austria and Prussia. After taking away all her wealthy areas, Germany was expected to pay a huge war indemnity. This led to the collapse of the German economy and the empire at large. When Hitler rose to power, he promised the Germans that he was going to rid them of the impediments imposed upon them. The causes of WW2 are indeed steps that were taken by Hitler to correct the mistakes of the Treaty of Versailles.

It is also important to note that Raditladi mentions the role of Africans in WW2. Many Africans participated in the event, and their role was deliberately omitted or minimally sketched in the historical records. Raditladi's poem brings the untold story and unrecorded events. The Western powers and their Allies have been given credit for conquering Germany. In this poem, history is being retold. The truth is put into perspective and the dignity of the Batswana and the Africans in general is restored. The world conflict is narrated in nine verses of six stanzas, with a fresh aspect of the conflict given in each stanza.

Stanza 1 Verse

1. *Go kile ga tsoga leruuruu maloba*
2. *Leruuruu la marumo le dikanono*
3. *Bana ba Yuropa ba ipetsa dihuba*
4. *Komano ya bona ya utlwala le kwano*
5. *Ba re lefatshe leno ope ga a le sema*
6. *Banna ba Yuropa botlhe ba a le lema*

A thundering has erupted
 A thundering of spears and cannons
 Children of Europe drummed their breasts
 And their quarrel was heard here too
 They said no man has created this world
 All men of Europe must plough it

The poet begins his opening line with an onomatopoeic sound, that is, the formation or use of words that imitate the sound associated with the event. The fricative /r/ sound is best suited to express the pain caused by cannons, fire, gun-

shots and bombs. To the mind of the researcher, this /r/ sound, expresses the damage that is caused by war. The fricative sound /r/ has been used to describe the scene of horror. The /r/ sound occurs four times in these phrases. The /r/ sound has been used together with the vowel sound /u/ to create drama. In fact, Raditladi combines consonance and assonance to produce an appropriate sound that creates a good mental image. Raditladi's text is based on the events that took place between 1939 and 1945. He refers to these events as "confusion" because the whole world was in a state of war. The words have been selected carefully to produce the desired image. When reading these words, one conjures up images and sounds of lions roaring, rolling rocks thundering down a precipice, and the whimpering voices of people and animals.

Raditladi goes on to intensify the gist of his subject that the jumble was of spears and cannons. Here he paints a desolate picture of gloom and futility. In simple terms, he is saying people are fighting, countries are at war. Raditladi pronounces that this started as a European war. *Bana ba Yuropa ba ipetsa dihuba* means that Europeans vowed never to retreat or back away from their land. Moloto suggests that nothing pictures the egotism and self confidence of the men of Europe better than when they drummed their breasts so hard that the African heard it too. No reasoning is more powerful than that nobody has created this land, all must plough it. This message is still beyond the reach, in practice, of many Christian nations as well (Moloto1970:181).

To Raditladi, the Europeans were not prepared to allow Hitler to do as he pleased. They retaliated, and their squabble proliferated and was heard in Africa. They stood their ground because the world belongs to everybody who lives in it. To them, Hitler's ambition of creating a German Empire was appalling. All Europeans deserve to have a piece of land, they could not be subjects of the German Empire.

Stanza 2 Verse

1. *Majeremane ba tswa modutla wa kgetse*
2. *Ba itshema maruarua ba kometsa batho*
3. *Le Mapolane ba ba meletse metse...*
4. *Le kwa Austria gone ba phura batho*
5. *Merafe ya etsa diphologolo sekgweng*
6. *Di utlwile lerumo la batsomi nageng*

**The Germans turned into a large bag
 Turned into whales and swallowed people
 They swallowed the villages of the Poles too
 Even in Austria they have grinded people
 Tribes were panicking like animals in the veldt
 Terrorised by bullet sounds in the jungle.**

Raditladi uses metaphor to compare the Germans with a large bag that can never be filled. This implies that they are greedy, insatiable and mean. The metaphor of a whale that is a leaky bag is indeed powerful imagery. The Germans were not going to be content with swallowing one nation. Their territorial greed was insatiable. With the imagery, the conflict intensifies; it is now no longer aimed generally but specifically against Poland. Austria was also invaded and defeated. Many European citizens were as terrified as animals when the gunshots of hunters reverberated in the veldt.

The metaphor is based on this event. Following the invasion of Poland, the Soviets began moving troops into the Baltic region. Finnish resistance in late November, led to a four month war, ending with Finnish concessions. France and

the United Kingdom, treated the Soviet attack on Finland as tantamount to entering the war on the side of the Germans and responded to the Soviet invasion by supporting its expulsion from the League of Nations. Though China had the authority to veto such an action, it was unwilling to alienate itself from either the Western powers or the Soviet Union and instead abstained. The Soviet Union was displeased by this course of action, and as a result, suspended all military aid to China. By mid-1940, the Soviet Union's occupation of the Baltics was complete with the installation of pro-Soviet puppet governments.

In western Europe, the British troops were deployed to the continent, but neither Germany nor the Allies launched direct attacks on the other. In April, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway to secure shipments of iron ore from Sweden which the allies would try to disrupt. Denmark immediately capitulated, and despite the support from the Allies, Norway was conquered within two months. British discontent over Norwegian campaign led to the replacement of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain by Winston Churchill on May 10, 1940. On that same day, Germany invaded France and the Low Countries. The Netherlands and Belgium were overrun in a few weeks using blitzkrieg tactics. British troops were forced to evacuate the continent, abandoning their heavy equipment by the end of the month. On 10 June, declared war on both France and the United Kingdom; twelve days later, when France surrendered, it was divided into German and Italian and occupation zones, and an unoccupied rump state under the Vichy Regime. In early July, the British attacked the French fleet in Algeria to prevent their seizure by Germany (Kizito 2008; Robert1992).

The historical information above demonstrates the relevance of Raditladi's imagery. It illustrates the voracious greed and unquenchable thirst for power. The whale is swallowing everything it comes across, as Hitler was attacking friends and foes indiscriminately. For instance, Poland was nonaligned to both the Western and the Axis powers, but she was the first to feel the wrath of the Germans.

Stanza 3 Verse

1. *Bana ba thebe e setsibasehibidu*
2. *Sesweu, setala, se motshe wa godimo*
3. *Ba ara, bana ba motlhaba o o morodu*
4. *Ba duma ba etsa tladi ya legodimo*
5. *Lentšwe la bona la utlwala le kwa Amerika*
6. *Le rona ra le utlwa re le mono Aferika*

Those with a rainbow-coloured shield
 With red, white and sky blue colours
 They thundered children of the red soil
 They roared like the lightning of the sky
 Their utterance was heard in afar in America
 We in Africa also heard it.

At this stage, with rainbow-coloured shield, the children of the red soil thundered and American and African heard. And so the conflict spread. The USA and USSR were ideological opponents, their views of economy, society, culture and freedom were totally opposed. But, knowing the danger that Nazism represented, they knew that they had to unite if they wanted to defeat Hitler. Churchill's explanation as to why he supported Stalin was that: "If Hitler would attack Evil, I'll help Satan.

The surprise attack by the Japanese navy on the United States' naval base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii on the morning of Sunday, December 7, 1941, resulted in the USA becoming involved in WW2. The attack was intended as a preventive measure to remove the U.S. Pacific Fleet as a factor in the war Japan was about to wage against Britain, the Netherlands, and the United States. These two aerial attacks with 353 aircraft, launched from six Japanese

aircraft carriers, caused America to officially join the Western powers to fight against Germany.

Africa was also drawn into the war. To avoid antagonizing the USSR, the Intelligence had two key roles to play in North Africa: aiding the fight for supremacy in the Western Desert and helping to supply the army with food and refreshments. Intelligence in the desert was fraught with difficulties from gathering or intercepting information right through to the processing the findings. In the Mediterranean intelligence, and Ultra in particular, the Allied codename for the Axis Enigma Ciphers played a very significant role in helping the Allies devastate the Axis supply convoys and gain a distinct edge over the Desert Fox. The Allies' knowledge of the German Air Force (GAF enigma ciphers) operations was most useful in north Africa, as the German air force was involved in most operations in the Mediterranean and the desert; its dispositions and movements could indicate the whereabouts of enemy units and activity while also helping plan the Allied air strategy (Kizito 2008; Robert1992).

Stanza 4 Verse

7. Majeremane ba rutla kwa Dankeke

8. Marumo a bona a otlolola lenaga

9. A thuba matlo a mantsi le dikereke;

10. Batho ba aga mesimeng ba se dinoga

11. Fa nonyane tsa baba di kala marung

7. Di latlha mae a tsona bogorogorong

The Germans invaded Dunkirk

Their spears were stretched out

Destroying many houses and churches

People hibernated though they were not snakes

When birds of the enemy soared in the sky

Shedding their eggs in space

The conflict spread to the conflict at Dunkirk where people lived in tunnels like snakes. Denmark resisted the Nazi invasion for one day before surrendering. The British tried to send help to Norway, but the Nazis swept them aside. Then, on 10 May 1940, the Nazis invaded Holland and Belgium. The allied forces were helpless to stop their 'Blitzkrieg' (lightning war) tactics. Holland surrendered on 14 May, the same day the Nazi army invaded France. British, Belgian and French troops retreated in the chaos that followed. On 21 May, the Nazis captured Amiens (Kizito 2008; Robert 1992).

By 22 May, the British had decided that the battle was lost, and they began to withdraw their troops to the sea port of Dunkirk. This opened up a gap in the Allied line which the Germans exploited. The Belgians surrendered on 28 May, but since 26 May, 'Operation Dynamo' had been transporting troops from Dunkirk to Britain. The British did not tell the French, who only found out when some French troops, who had tried to flee to Britain, complained to their commander that they had not been allowed to get onto the boats. *Batho ba aga mesimeng jaaka dinoga*, while ... *nonyane tsa baba di kala marung* meaning the aircraft was soaring high in the sky and *Di latlha mae a tsone bogorogorong* purport that they were throwing explosions and salvos from the air. This is another good imagery, which likens aircraft to birds and eggs to bombs.

Winston Churchill was quoted as saying: "Arm yourselves, and be ye men of valour, and be in readiness for the conflict; for it is better for us to perish in battle than to look upon the outrage of our nation and our altar" (BBC, May 19, 1940, London.)

Stanza 5 Verse

1. *Kwa Fora, Mafora ba relela ba wa*
2. *Rona Maaferika ra ema matseba*
3. *Kgodumo tsa leselesele go lowa*
4. *Morafe wa mokgaphana wa motlhaba*
5. *Ra ema fela sesweu senyelesemane*
6. *Ra ema fela sesole, bana ba basimane*

In France, the French people, tripped and fell
 We Africans then stood alert
 Kgodumo {en-circlers} of leselesele {thorn tree} in the fight
 A nation dedicated to its course
 We stood like white folk the English people
 We stood like soldiers, effervescent boys

From Stanza 5 Raditladi, tells the role of Africans as well as their sentiments in the world war. He opens the stanza by alerting the readers that big powers such as France, were defeated by Germany. Germans swept through Holland and Luxembourg and were moving on Belgium. The Blitzkrieg that had claimed Poland, Denmark and Norway was heading for France and the Low Countries. Luxembourg could not resist, and surrendered immediately. Holland attempted a conventional defence, flooding large areas and blowing up bridges, but the German Luftwaffe bombed Rotterdam on May 14, killing 800 people and leaving 78,000 homeless. The Dutch king and government fled to London, and Holland surrendered the next day to spare other cities.

Belgium declared its neutrality and refused to allow the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) to enter the country. The BEF defied the Belgian order, but had no effect. German paratroopers landed directly on top of the main defensive line at

Fort Eben Emael and used flame-throwers to force the Fort to capitulate. Belgium surrendered on May 27.

The Germans were counting on the French not to attack them. Feinting in Belgium, the main thrust came when the Germans sent tanks through the supposedly impassible Ardennes. Infantry held open the corridor as panzers crossed the Meuse River in France on May 13.

French General Charles de Gaulle's 4th Armoured Division made the only Allied counterattack on the Meuse bridgehead. The French tanks, especially the Char B1bis and the Somua, were superior one-on-one to the German Panzerkampfwagen pzkw I and II panzers. But the German tanks had radios that allowed them to manoeuvre as a group, while the French used their tanks as infantry support. De Gaulle's attack was too little too late.

In this stanza, Raditladi enunciates that even if Africa did not have the sophisticated weaponry of powerful countries such as France, they stood their ground. By saying *Rona Maaferika ra ema matseba* he emphasizes that Africa's tactics were different from those of vanquished countries. Africa's strategy was tactically superior. Moloto (1969:182) asserts that Raditladi's is patriotic by emphasizing the African bravery. The line *Kgodumo tsa leselesele go lowa* portrays the method of warfare that distinguished Africa from the defeated nations of Europe, and helped Africa teach Hitler a lesson. Moloto describes *Kgodumo* as a legendary animal able to draw you into its jaws as one sucks liquids, and that is how Raditladi describes of his own people in the conflict that continues to intensify (1969:182).

Raditladi discloses that Africa's participation in the war was an invitation from the colonial powers. Raditladi refers in particular to the Anglophore colonies that supported Britain. *Ra ema fela sesweu senyelesemane*; means we took instructions from the English, we obeyed and carried out commands as

requested. By saying *Ra ema fela sosele ...* he implies that African participants fought like English soldiers, they were not regarded as soldiers according to the determination and definition of the colonizers. This also implies that they were learning new and different procedures from what they were used to. In the midst of conflict, there is humour. There is absolute sincerity in admitting African ignorance of European warfare, yet implicit willingness to learn. After all, it has already been submitted that Africans are *Kgodumo* only in thorn bush country (1969:182). Despite having to learn new strategies at the battle front, they asserted themselves very well.

Stanza 6 Verse

1. *Ditlhobolo ra di rwala magetleng*
2. *Le bo quick march ra ba gata re sa ba itse*
3. *Present Arms; Tlhobolo ra e baya diphatlheng*
4. *Attention; ra mo ema kgomo ya letsetse*
5. *Ra phunya mafatshe ra fitlha Egepeto*
6. *Benkasi ra mo tsena re le mophato*

We bore our guns on the shoulders
 We responded to quick march not knowing it
 Present Arms; we placed the guns before our foreheads
 Attention; we stood like a nursing cow
 We travelled places until we reached Egypt
 We entered Bangkok as a regiment

In stanza six, Raditladi demonstrates the kind of instructions that were given to the soldiers. By *Ditlhobolo ra di rwala magetleng*, Raditladi demonstrates that the Africans were undertaking something that was not a common practice to them. This imagery is strengthened by the line *Le bo quick march ra ba gata re sa ba*

itse meaning that this was an unknown terrain for African fighters. The language used was also foreign to them; hence, their generals were singing instructions and at the same time demonstrating practically. The author uses another image, which has already been discussed in chapter three, when he says when the general ordered for their “attention” they all stood like *kgomo ya lotsetse*. When a *lotsetse* is feeding her calf she stands motionless so that she cannot disturb the sucking calf. The Africans travelled through the continent until they reached Egypt. As part of the English army, they were fighting against the colonies of the Axis powers. Although the soldiers came from different areas, cultures and racial backgrounds, they fought as one unit, as a regiment.

Stanza 7 Verse

1. *Tse dintshontsho tsa matutu re mabeta*
2. *Re betabetanye le Mantariana*
3. *Difofane tsa bona ra utlwa di feta,*
4. *Di lelekilwe ke matshubametsana*
5. *A pagologang digodimo di fofa*
6. *O bone di latlha diphuka di lefa*

We black forces are combatants
 We wrestled with the Italians
 We heard their aircraft passing by
 Being chased by sky rockets
 Throwing missiles high in the sky
 Catching a glimpse of disbursing wings

African patriotism continues when Raditladi refers to Africans as warriors or fighters. He records what many Eurocentric historians failed to pick up; when the Allies attacked any enemy, the Africans were part of the army. For example, the Allies invaded Italy using European and African forces according to Raditladi.

The main effort in the invasion of the Italian mainland was Operation AVALANCHE, at Salerno, where the US Fifth Army under General Mark W. Clark came ashore. The Fifth Army was composed of the U.S. VI Corps, the British X Corps and the US 82nd Airborne Division, a total of about nine divisions. The plan called for Clark's Fifth Army to come ashore and eventually link up with Montgomery's British Eighth Army advancing north from BAYTOWN. Its primary objectives were to seize the port of Naples to ensure resupply, and to cut across to the east coast, trapping the Axis troops further south.

The Eighth Army had been making quick progress from the "toe" in the face of German delaying actions. It united its front with the Fifth Army on 16 September, and captured the airfields near Foggia, on the east coast, on 27 September. These gave the Allied air forces the opportunity to strike new targets in France, Germany and the Balkans. The Fifth Army captured Naples on 1 October (the first major European city to be liberated during WW 2), and reached the line of the Volturno River on October 6th. This provided a natural barrier, securing Naples and the Campainian Plain with its vital airfields, from a counterattack. Meanwhile the British Eighth Army had advanced to a line from Larino to Campobasso. The whole of southern Italy was now in Allied hands, and the drive northward could begin.

Raditladi describes warfare in the sky. He says they heard Italian aircraft hovering and escaping as they were chased by sky rockets. The Allied powers were launching missiles at the Axis powers. The Axis war planes were crashed into pieces, which fell from the sky.

Stanza 8 Verse

1. *Hitlara re kile ra utlwa a ipolela*
2. *A re ke tladi e kileng ya tshosa ditšhaba*
3. *Le basadi ya ba tlholela go lela*
4. *Rona ra re phenyo ka matlho o tla e leba*
5. *Ka diatla gone ga a na go e tshwara*
6. *Majeremane ba roroma diphara*

**We heard Hitler boasting about his military
That he is the lightning that frightens nations
And forebode mourning for women
We told him he would indeed see victory
But he would not be able to handle victory
The Germans buttocks started to shiver**

In this stanza, Raditladi voices Hitler's boastful statements. He proclaimed himself as lightning that frightens people. The image of lightning symbolizes power and dread. People were anguished about this lightning that caused misery to women. Africans warned Hitler that talk is cheap because they will never allow him to see victory. When the Africans started resurfacing, the Germans were shivering. They were frightened to death.

Stanza 9 Verse

1. *Lerumo la rona matlhakanyabatho*
2. *Le tlhakantshe Musolini le Japane*
3. *La etsa dinare la robokanya batho*
4. *Hitlara la mo gadika jaaka phane*
5. *Ka jeno ntwaga e yo go ituletswe fela*
6. *Bairakgang ga ba yo ba iphile lefela*

Our spears bring people together
 I brought Mussolini and Japan together
 The spear destroyed people like the buffalo does
 It also roasted Hitler like a worm
 Today the war is over; there is ease
 Contestants are no more, they have sacrificed themselves

The African spear combined Mussolini and Japan, vanquishing them – Moloto suggests that the compound word of the last line, *Bairakgang*, seems to crown Raditladi's deliberate exploitation of the device of conflict: the end of conflict is the end of contestants. By this device, Raditladi is compared, in spirit, to the indigenous bards. His imagery is also in the class of the traditional.

The war of Britain was the war of Africans. Raditladi corrects the historical facts by revealing that Africans need recognition for the part they played in the war. As far as the researcher is concerned, E.S. Moloto has it completely wrong when he asserts that:

Raditladi gives the impression that his World War II was virtually the sole responsibility of Africans, and perhaps in his heart of hearts the Tswana. It might have genuinely intended to portray or to make the share of his people prominent: but so, probably would many a national poet act (1969:184).

The world conflict evoked in Raditladi's mind the casualties that result from hostilities between nations. In the following poem *Motlhabani* (A soldier), Raditladi recollects an event that occurred in the history of the Batswana where a soldier dies in the struggle. The event is not mentioned by name and no date is provided either. The combat might have been between the Batswana and the

Matebele, as there was no love lost between the two groups. Again, one may assume that the conflict was between the two Batswana ethnic groups, as they used to confront each other very frequently, or it may have been a battle with any African tribe for that matter, as this was a common scene during the *Mfecane* and *Difecane* periods. The *Mfecane* will be discussed later in this chapter. But again, the researcher does not rule out the possibility that Raditladi might have been referring to the soldier lost during WW2:

Under normal circumstances, dead people are buried at the side of the grave, tomb, mausoleum or crematorium, depending on the culture of the people. Sometimes, the burial service will immediately follow the funeral, in which case a funeral procession travels from the site of the memorial service to the burial site. Sometimes, the burial service takes place at a later time, when the final resting place is ready. If the decedent served in a branch of the armed forces, military rites are often accorded at the burial service.

In many religious traditions, pallbearers who are usually males who are close, but not immediate relatives (such as cousins, nephews or grandchildren) or friends of the decedent, will carry the casket from the chapel (of a funeral home or church) to the hearse, and from the hearse to the site of the burial service. The pallbearers often sit in a reserved section during the memorial service.

According to most religions, the coffins are kept closed during the burial ceremony. In Eastern Orthodox funerals, the coffins are reopened just before burial to allow loved ones to look at the deceased one last time and say their final farewells. The morticians will typically ensure that all jewellery, including a wrist watch that was displayed at the wake is placed in the casket before it is buried or entombed. It would be unseemly to have the decedent's heirs squabbling over a Rolex or an engagement ring. Custom requires that everything goes into the ground.

There is an exception, in the case of cremation. Such items tend to melt or suffer damage, so they are usually removed before the body goes into the furnace. Pacemakers are removed prior to cremation; if they were left in the body they could possibly explode and damage the crematorium. Raditladi describes a burial service conducted at war:

7.3 Motlhabani

Le fa e le mogwasa o ne o seyo!
Le fa e le moropa ka baka leo
Fa re baya setopo sa gagwe mo phupung
Phate ya kgongwana o ne a sa e bewa
Setlhako lenaong o ne a sa se newa
Ra mo tsenya e le segwere mo mmung
A ladiwa legaeng le thobane

Not a rustling sound was heard
 Nor a drum at that moment
 When we buried his body
 He was not wrapped in a cow skin
 He did not have a shoe on his foot
 We laid him naked as he was
 His was stick in close proximity.

People are accustomed to certain mores that are respected during funeral services, such as quiet, but usually when a soldier is buried, it is done according to the custom of the profession. In some instances a brass band will play a melody that suits the occasion. When the soldier is finally lowered

into his grave, the sound of drums escort the descending body of the fallen hero or in some cases gunshots are fired to bid him farewell. This kind of farewell appears to be a universal practice. Raditladi introduces his poem by foregrounding the activity that comes almost at the end of the service. The line *Le fa e le mogwasa o ne o seyo*, is used to draw the reader's attention to the occasion. The reader starts asking whether the sound was supposed to have occurred anyway. The second line *Le fa e le moropa ka baka leo* confirms the stillness that was not expected at such an occasion. Raditladi uses parallelism of the first two phrases to emphasize the contrast in an occasion of such enormity. Parallelism is used in various forms. The phrases may contrast each other, affirming one thing and then denying its opposite (or saying that the opposite is true for another set of circumstances), they may also affirm each other as is the case in Raditladi's example:

Le fa e le mogwasa.....

Le fa e le moropa.....

Repetition of these phrases does not only produce delightful music of words but also describes the astounding and disquieting scenario. The lines above complement each other and they express similar thought. The lines also develop the thought that is being expressed. The second line is used to clarify the first. It might seem that there is a somewhat similar pattern of thought between these two lines, but the second line really is not a repeat of what the first line says. The two lines build on a common theme, each being one aspect of that theme. The two lines emphasize the stillness and silence *fa re baya setoto sa gagwe mo phupung*. He was buried in stillness and quietness. This image may suggest that there was not time to make proper funeral arrangements because of the strife. The soldiers did not have any choice but to bury their comrade immediately. It was not possible to take the body home for a dignified burial during a war. The soldiers were always on the move therefore, they could not carry a burden that could expose them to danger. The burial at that point was the most dignified that

could be made for a fellow soldier. They could not leave him to be devoured by the vultures and beasts of the veldt. *Phate ya kgongwana o ne a sa e bewa*. As was indicated earlier in the introduction as well as in chapter three, a cow was Motswana's real God. When a person dies, he is wrapped in the skin of a black cow. The cow is so sacred that from birth to death it plays a pivotal role in the life of the Batswana. There was no time to slaughter a cow. Raditladi is trying to illustrate that conditions were anomalous; it was peculiar to expect people to operate normally under such circumstances. This is confirmed by *Setlhako lenaong a sa se bewa*. The standard procedure was not followed because the conditions were not conducive for a descent funeral. These images in the poem evoke in the reader's mind the harsh realities of life. The WW2 conflict left many families destitute because the breadwinners died in the strife. Many children became orphans just because some greedy individuals were power-hungry. It is pathetic to see a man die who probably had a family *a tsenngwa e le segwere mo mmung*. *Segwere* is a carrot-like edible root, it also means naked and unclothed. This is symbolical of African custom; for the body to go back where it comes from; from the soil. In contrast to Western culture that looks up to the heavens; the Africans believe in the underworld. For instance Lowe the forefather of the Batswana, originated in a cave.

"Ga twe mo tshimologong Batswana ba tswa kwa ga Lowe, ba santse ba le setshaba se le sengwe, ba ise ba arogane ka merafe le meratshwana.

Lowe o dule mo logageng, mme e rile a ise a tswe a roma motlhanka wa gagwe wa boikanyo, Matsieng, go ya go bula kgoro ya logaga le go bona gore kwa ntle go ntse jang. Matsieng a tsamaya a fitlha a bula kgoro ya logaga, a tswela kwa ntle mme a fitlhela lefatshe le itumedisa matlho a motho; le kgabile ka dimela tsa methalethale ka e ne e le nako ya dipula, go bonala botala fela,

go utlwala monko o o monate wa dithunya. A bona ditlhare di rwele maungo a a neng a lebega a le monate. A utlwa melodi wa dinonyane e kete di itumeletse kgorogo ya moeng wa tsona, yo di neng di simolola go mmona. Tsotlhe tse tsa mo gapa maikutlo.” (Malepe, 1974:1).

It is said that the Batswana originated from Lowe, when they were still a unified nation, before they broke up into small tribes. Lowe surfaced from the cave, but before emerging, he sent his reliable servant, Matsieng, to open the gateway of the cave and glimpse outside to see what the world looked like. Matsieng proceeded to open the gateway, went out and discovered that the world was a most attractive place; dressed elegantly in various flora for it was during rainy season, the environment was green, with the fresh fragrance of flowers. He saw trees bearing fruit that appeared to be juicy and sweet. He listened to the beautiful melody of birds that were very happy to witness the arrival of their visitor, who they were seeing for the first time. All these filled his heart with pleasure.

It is for this reason that the traditional Batswana, in particular, and African people in general build houses that replicate a cave and that a traditional grave was also an imitation of a cave. The traditional grave of the Batswana was not the conventional rectangular shape that we know today. It was round and deep. The corpse did not lie down like it does today, but stood straight on its feet, wrapped in a cow skin. Men were always buried in the cattle kraal, to look after their stock. A man was buried with a stick, *A ladiwa legaeng le thobane*, so he could continue his duties as a shepherd.

O letse ka lesedi la ngwedi
Mmele wa gagwe o rotha le madi
Mmu re ne ra o fata ka dithebe
Phupu re ne ra e epa ka digai
Ka kepu di ne di setse kwa gae
Sefikantswe sa gagwe ya nna thebe
Baboki ba palelwa ke go boka
Mosetaseti yole wa mabaka

He was buried by the struggling moonbeams
Blood dripping from his body
The ground was scraped by shields
The grave was dug by assegais
For we left the mattocks at home
His shield became his tombstone
Poets were unable to pay their last respect
To the legend that had passed on

The soldier was buried at night because of the cover of darkness, and they had to depend on the moonlight to see what they were doing. Even if they had torches, they could not use them because they did not want to expose themselves to the enemy, which is why they did not want to make any sound. Under normal circumstances, they would have cleaned his body; cut his hair and shaved his beard so that he looked presentable. As this was their very last moment with the deceased, they had to make sure that he looked good; this was how he would be remembered.

Raditladi accentuates the state of affairs as it was. He paints a clear picture of the desperation and anxiety the soldiers were feeling by stating that the soldier was buried like *segwere* and again *mmele wa gagwe o rotha le madi*. This demonstrates a confused situation and frantic setting. The soldiers did not have spades and pick axes, and hence they used shields and assegais to dig the grave. For the soldiers not to forget where they buried their comrade, it was said, *Sefikantswe sa gagwe ya nna thebe*. Throughout history, many soldiers have died in wars without their remains being identified. Nations now have a symbolic Tomb of the Unknown Soldier that represents the war grave of those unidentified soldiers. They usually contain the remains of an unidentified soldier ("known but to God" as the stone is sometimes inscribed) and thought to be impossible ever to identify, so that he might serve as a surrogate for all of the unknown dead wherever they fell.

Much work goes into trying to find a certain soldier, and to verify that it is indeed one of the relevant nation's soldiers (Wikipedia-Encyclopedia)

Most people pay tribute to fallen heroes, especially to soldiers who sacrifice their lives to protect their country and its citizens. This can be done through drum majorettes, choirs, speeches and poetry. Again this is done during a normal funeral under normal circumstances. It was unfortunate that the fallen hero was buried like an animal. There were no shouts of acclamation for a legend that died at a war zone.

Batho Tebele ba ne ba lela

Ba lela a lekola semelamela

Ba re ba lela ba le matlho a kwano

Ba re, re fe bana re "khombize"

Re neele bana, rra, o ko o re lese!

Nkwe marema le ka tšhaka o fano

Ke yo o tsutsubantse sefatlhego

Modimako go tshelang yo o sego

A lament was heard from afar
 Weeping as if examining a smelling herb
 Weeping with downcast eyes
 And said, give us children "and show us"
 Give us children, father and leave us alone
 Leopard chopper is here with a spear
 Here is he with a frowning face
 An idol fortunate to be alive

The death of a soldier was a loss to many people; the fallen hero was mourned throughout the land and expressions of grief came from far and near. The weeping was a never ending occurrence. Tears were falling from people's eyes as if a herb was applied to cure their eyes. This reminds one of a sermon by Dr Neil Chadwick (Encyclopedia-Britanica) in which he said: "We all know that depression, sorrow, and tears are the natural response to loss, whether it be loss of a family member, friend, job, or even a pet. I can still vividly recall the day I had to take our dog to the vet for a lethal injection. He had been struck by a car and had internal injuries beyond repair. Unfortunately, I was on the way to do a funeral service for a complete stranger. I'm sure that any tears I shed at the funeral were more over my pet than for the stranger who had died". Paul also writes about the sorrow we experience when someone we love has died (1 Thessalonians 4:13).

It is important to note that Paul is not telling the Thessalonians that they should not grieve at all. Biblical spirituality is not stoicism or denial. Jesus wept at Lazarus' tomb because of death's abnormality even though he knew that he would raise him a few moments later (John 11:35). Paul wept with the Ephesian elders because he knew he would not see them again in this life (Acts 20:37-38)

even though he was confident he would not be permanently separated from them. This kind of grief is normal and healthy. The Bible says we were created to have deep, loving relationships with others that never end. Nevertheless, it hurts when the relationship is interrupted by death.

In Raditladi's text, it appears as if people were not only weeping for the fallen hero but also that the war had been lost. One gets the impression that the defeated soldiers were asking for mercy from the victor. The victor, after conquering the enemy, confiscated their goods as well as their children. The line *Re fe bana re khombize* used in parallel with *Re neele bana o ko o re lese*, emphasizes an immeasurable loss. The defeated were asking for their children who were irreplaceable. The victor could take everything but give back their children. The enemy was showing no remorse because *O tsutsubantse sefatlhego*, the chance of making peace was very slim.

Raditladi's poem has images, echoes and symbols of the poem based on an incident in the Peninsular War, which was part of the generation-long war between France, under Napoleon Bonaparte, and pretty much the rest of Europe. The "peninsula" in the Peninsula War was Iberia, which is to say, Spain and Portugal. Napoleon engineered a *coup d'état* in Spain in early 1808, which made the Spanish very unhappy. In the popular insurrection that followed, the British tried to join the Spanish against the French. The Spanish proved to be difficult allies, though, and a British army, under Sir John Moore, was forced to retreat to the port of Corunna, on Spain's north-western tip, from where they were to be evacuated back to Britain. The retreat had all the problems of discipline and morale that are familiar to every retreat, with the additional hardships of bad terrain and appalling weather. Worse yet; when they got to Corunna on January 11, 1809, the British troopships that were to evacuate them had not yet arrived, so Sir John had to organize defences and fight a battle against the French. In the Battle of Corunna he was mortally wounded having been "struck in his left breast and shoulder by a cannon shot, which broke his ribs, his arm, lacerated

his shoulder and the whole of his left side and lungs". He remained conscious, and composed, throughout the several hours of his dying; among his final words were "Remember me to your sister, Stanhope", referring to his friend, the intrepid Near East Asia traveller, Lady Hester Stanhope. He was buried in the ramparts of the town and the funeral is celebrated in a well known poem by Charles Wolfe.

The poet Robert Southey wrote an account of these events. His account was read by Charles Wolfe, a young country parson, at a place named Donaghmore, in Ireland. Wolfe then wrote this poem, in 1814, when he was 22 years old. The poem was published in a provincial Irish newspaper three years later. Lord Byron discovered it five years after that, admired it tremendously, but did not know who had written it. Wolfe was not conclusively identified as the author until after his death from TB, in 1823, at the age of 31. *The Burial of Sir John Moore* after Corunna begins:

*Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.
We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning;
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light
And the lantern dimly burning.
No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet nor in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.*

Raditladi's poem has similar features. A soldier dies on the battlefield and is buried immediately. Wolfe in his poem uses symbols such as a drum, funeral note, rampart, farewell shot, sods, bayonets, moonbeams, lantern, coffin, sheets, shrouds, martial cloak and gun shots.

A funeral is a rite to mark the burial or cremation of a corpse; it is a special ceremony held immediately before the burial. Every human being irrespective of social status or erudition level is given such honour. At the funerals of luminaries, such as an army general, a drum is used to create a befitting atmosphere and milieu to bid farewell to a person of such virtue.

In his poem Raditladi did not use the same symbols as Wolfe because of the diverse cultural practices. Usually during a European war, a rampart is built, that is, a defensive fortification made of an earthen embankment, often topped by a low protective wall. Hence in Wolfe's poem the soldiers were hastened to take the corpse into the fort. In Raditladi's poem, the corpse is buried in the bush, and the soldiers use assegais and shields, which were the traditional African tools of the time, to dig the grave. In Wolfe's poem, the soldiers use bayonets, that is, a blade attached to the end of a rifle used for stabbing. This also implies that Wolfe's soldiers were using rifles while Raditladi's were using spears and assegais in their respective wars.

In both instances, the event happened at night and both poets use moonbeams for light when digging the grave. Raditladi's text does not use a lantern as a form of illumination because the Batswana of the time did not have lanterns. Raditladi's sensitivities to the Setswana culture and tradition is apparent here, since he did not use a symbol that was foreign to the Batswana. Lanterns made of horn were used in the mid to late 16th century in Europe. Lanterns were also constructed of leather, with a single lens made from a slice of an ox or steer horn for light. Lanterns may have been used in the fort by European soldiers, but

African soldiers who did not build forts could not carry lanterns while fighting in the bush.

Another contrast is that of a cow skin against a coffin. The traditional African used a cow's skin to bury the dead while Europeans used a coffin, casket or funeral box to contain the remains of the deceased, for burial. The Europeans also covered the corpse with a sheet or shroud before placing it in the casket. A shroud is a piece of linen cloth which has been venerated for centuries by some Christians as the burial garment. Some Europeans used a large rectangular piece of cloth to cover the body of the deceased. Raditladi did not use this symbol in his poem, as it is not part of the traditional Batswana practice. He also omitted the use of a martial cloak, a garment that covers the casket of a dead soldier or a military man, because in Setswana traditional culture, all men and women were wrapped with a cow's skin irrespective of status or class. In Raditladi's text, there is no "narrow bed" or "lonely pillow" because the corpse did not lie horizontally but was placed vertically in the grave.

In the absence of fancy decoration and because of the time factor, a shield became the soldier's tombstone in Raditladi's text, while in Wolfe's there was no tombstone initially. Later, when the French took the town, a monument was built over his grave by order of Marshal Soult. The monument was rebuilt and made more permanent in 1811. In his native Glasgow, Moore is commemorated by a statue in George Square, and in England by a monument in St Paul's Cathedral and an equestrian statue at Shorncliffe. Houses are named for him at The High School of Glasgow and H M Queen Victoria School, Dunblane (Maurice 1904; Mayne 1899 & Moore 1834).

On the basis of similarities between the two texts, one cannot but acknowledge Leitch's assertion that a text is not an autonomous or unified object, but a set of relations with other texts. Its system of language, grammar and lexicon, drag with them numerous bits and pieces that are traces of history so that the text

resembles a cultural Salvation Army Outlet with unaccountable collections or incompatible ideas, beliefs and sources (1983:59).

According to J Hillis Miller in Bloom (1979:225), any poem is parasitical in its turn on earlier poems, or it contains earlier poems within itself as enclosed parasites in another version of perpetual reversal of parasite and host. The previous text is both the ground of the new one and something the new one must annihilate by incorporating it. Raditladi uses the same tools as Wolfe does to describe the death and funeral of a brave Motswana soldier. After the conception of Raditladi's text, one appreciates the eminence and traits of all military men. One begins to understand the danger and hazards that military men face every day and cannot ignore the reality of a person buried in the bush, without family and friends. Wolfe's poem was about a British soldier. Raditladi's text has globalized Wolfe's image by cutting across cultures and continents. Raditladi has extended the image he borrows from Wolfe that if a soldier dies in the battle, his people are left in agony. In this way Wolfe's text, which was initially the host, becomes the parasite.

As has been alluded to earlier, battles in Africa, as elsewhere in the world, have been the order of the day, especially during the *Mfecane/Difecane* period. Much as WW 2 produced heroes or villains such as Hitler, Mussolini and Churchill, the *Mfecane* period also produced leaders such as Shaka, Mzilikazi, Soshangane and Mswati, who were also soldiers and played a prominent role in reshaping the history of southern Africa.

Mfecane (Zulu name, also known as the Difaqane or Lifaqane in Sesotho), is an African expression that has meaning similar to "the crushing" or "scattering". It describes a period of widespread chaos and disturbance in southern Africa during the period between 1815 and about 1840.

The *Mfecane* began between the Tugela River and Pongola River, where Shaka established, through wars, a militaristic Zulu kingdom. The *Mfecane* spread from there, leading to the formation and consolidation of other groups – such as the Matabele, the Abambo and the Makololo – and the creation of states such as modern Lesotho. Raditladi's poem is based on Shaka's history. It has been recorded that Shaka built the Zulu into a great warlike machine. The value of this poem is that it reflects the history of South Africa from an African perspective. Raditladi is telling the story from an insider's point of view. He and his people were directly affected by Shaka's wars. Some of Shaka's generals, such as Mzilikazi, who was the Matabele leader, encroached on the Batswana land. Many wars were fought between the Batswana and Matabele, as has been already discussed.

7.4 Kgosi Shaka

There are varying theories on the ultimate causes of the catastrophic, bloody migration of many different groups in the area. Populations had increased greatly in Zululand. The introduction of maize (corn) from the Americas through the Portuguese in Mozambique was a factor. Maize produced more food than indigenous grasses on the same land, and thus could sustain the larger population, at the cost of greater water usage. It also allowed Shaka to raise a standing army, as growing crops was not part of their duties. By the end of the 1700s, much of the arable land was occupied. Declining rainfall and a ten-year drought in the early 1800s meant that a battle for land and water resources began in earnest.

Other possible causes were the new tactics and weapons developed by the Zulus during this period. Instead of using throwing spears, the Zulus started to use broad bladed stabbing spears known as *iklwa*, which could be used very efficiently in close combat. The Zulus also instituted a form of conscription where every man had to serve the king as a soldier in special age regiments, known as

impis. Not all peoples affected by the *Mfecane* adopted this practice, but many of the Nguni peoples did.

Of all the great men who rose to prominence in the old Zulu kingdom, King Shaka *kaSenzangakhona* remains perhaps the most talked about and the least understood. The image perpetuated of him in the European world was shaped during his lifetime by a handful of white adventurers, whose letters and memoirs deliberately blackened Shaka's reputation for their own ends, and did lasting damage to his name. After the triumph of colonialism, white historians justified their control over the Zulu by using that image to damn as cruel and corrupt the independent political systems they had displaced.

Shaka was the subject of fervent mythologising among African groups as well. He was cast either in the mould of a heroic warrior of almost classical proportions, or as a ruthless tyrant and oppressor. Shaka has come down to us as a glowering stereotype, frozen in time on the misty hill-sides of a long-vanished Zululand, clutching his fabled stabbing spear and great hide war-shield, the very embodiment of every European concept of the ultimate African warrior-king. Raditladi could not ignore this colossal figure, and was inspired to write about him:

Figure 7.1

Source: www.amazon.com/Shaka-Zulu/dp/B000HVK3BS

Shaka was a great Zulu king and conqueror. He lived in an area of south-east Africa between the Drakensberg and the Indian Ocean, a region populated by many independent Nguni chiefdoms. During his brief reign, more than a hundred chiefdoms were brought together in a Zulu kingdom which survived not only the death of its founder but later military defeat and calculated attempts to break it up.

7.4.1 Early life

Shaka was a son of Senzangakhona, ruler of an insignificant small chiefdom, the Zulu. His mother was Nandi, the daughter of a Langeni chief. Information about Shaka's early years is gleaned entirely from oral sources. It is claimed that Shaka was born into Senzangakhona's household in about 1785, but that the couple were not yet married according to traditional custom. A more credible account is that the relationship between Nandi and Senzangakhona was illicit, and that Shaka was born in Langeni territory at the Nguga homestead of Nandi's uncle.

Shaka's name is said to stem from Senzangakhona's claim that Nandi was not pregnant but was suffering from an intestinal condition caused by the *iShaka* beetle. Despite his attempts to deny paternity, Senzangakhona eventually installed Nandi as his third wife. Shaka thus spent his earliest years at his father's esiKlebeni homestead near the present Babanango, in the hallowed locality known as the *EmaKhosini* or Burial-place of the Kings, where Senzangakhona's forebears, the descendants of the Zulu (*Nkosinkulu*), had been chiefs for generations. The relationship between Senzangakhona and Nandi seems to have been an unhappy one that ended in the chieftain driving Nandi from his court.

Nandi and her son sought sanctuary in the Mhlathuze Valley of the Langeni people. Here, growing up as a fatherless child, Shaka seems to have been the victim of humiliation and cruel treatment by the Langeni boys. At that time there were two strong rival Nguni groups, the Mthethwa led by the paramount chief Dingiswayo, and the Ndwandwe under the ferocious Zwide. Later, probably at the time of the Great Famine, known as the *Madlantule* (c.1802), Shaka was taken to the Mthethwa people, where shelter was found in the home of Nandi's aunt. He thus grew up in the court of Dingiswayo, who welcomed them with friendliness. However, Shaka suffered much from the bullying and teasing of the Mthethwa boys, too, who resented his claims to chiefly descent.

As he grew to manhood, Shaka began to discover new talents and faculties. Outwardly, he was tall and powerfully built, and his skill and daring gave him a natural mastery over the youths in his age group; inwardly, he was developing a thirst for power. Probably when he was about twenty-three years old, he was drafted into one of the *Mthethwa* regiments where he found a satisfaction he had never known before. With the *impi* in the *iziCwe* regiment, he had the companionship he had previously lacked, while the battlefield provided a stadium in which he could demonstrate his talents and courage. His outstanding deeds of courage attracted the attention of his overlord and, rising rapidly in Dingiswayo's

army, he became one of his foremost commanders. At this time, Shaka was given the name *Nodumehlezi* (the one who when seated causes the earth to rumble). While in the Mthethwa army Shaka became engrossed in problems of strategy and battle tactics, and Dingiswayo contributed much toward Shaka's later accomplishments in war. Militarism was thereafter to be a way of life for him, and one that he was to inflict on thousands of others.

7.4.2 Shaka usurps the Zulu Chieftdom

On the death of Shaka's father (c. 1816), Dingiswayo lent his young protégé the military support necessary to oust and assassinate his senior brother Sigujana, and make himself chieftain of the Zulu, although he remained a vassal of Dingiswayo. As Dingiswayo's favourite, he seems to have been granted an unusual amount of freedom to carve out a bigger principality for himself by conquering and assimilating his neighbours, including the Buthelezi clan and the Langeni of his boyhood days.

7.4.3 Dingiswayo's death

According to the diary of Henry Francis Fynn, Dingiswayo's death (c.1818) was the result of Shaka's treachery, though firm testimony of this is lacking. However, it is known that when Dingiswayo fought his last battle, Shaka did not arrive at the scene until after his overlord's capture. He thus retained his forces intact. Zwide later murdered Dingiswayo, and, when the leaderless Mthethwa state collapsed, Shaka immediately assumed leadership and began conquering surrounding chieftdoms himself, adding their forces to his own and building up a new kingdom.

7.4.4 Defeat of the Ndwandwe

Zwide decided to smash his new rival. After a first expedition had been defeated by the superior control and strategies of the Zulu at Gqokoli Hill, Zwide, in April 1818, sent his whole army into Zululand. This time Shaka wore out the invaders

by pretending he was retreating and drawing Zwide's forces deep into his own territory; then, when he had successfully exhausted the invaders, he flung his own regiments on them and defeated them conclusively at the Mhlathuze River. This defeat shattered the Ndwandwe state. Part of the main Ndwandwe force under Shoshangane, together with the Jere under Zwangendaba, the Maseko under Ngwane, and the Msene led by Nxaba, fled northwards. The survivors of the main Ndwandwe force settled for a time on the upper Pongola River. In 1826, under Zwide's successor, Sikhunyane, they again fought the Zulu, but were totally routed. The majority then submitted to Shaka. He was able to recruit additional warriors from these sources and proceeded to train them in his own methods of close combat.

7.4.5. Shaka's supremacy

By then, Shaka had no major rival in the area of present day KwaZulu/Natal. During his brief reign, which lasted only ten years after his final defeat of the Ndwandwe, his regiments continuously went on campaigns, steadily extending their assaults further afield as the areas near at hand were stripped of their cattle. If a chiefdom resisted, it was conquered and either destroyed or, like the Thembu and Chunu, driven off as landless refugees. When chiefdoms submitted, Shaka left the local administration in the hands of the reigning chief or another member of the traditional ruling family appointed by him.

7.4.6 Zulu military system

Once in power, Shaka began reorganizing the forces of his people in accordance with ideas he had developed as a warrior in Dingiswayo's army.

The assegai. He had seen that the traditional type of spear, a long-handled assegai thrown from a distance, was no good for the regulated fighting in close formation he had in mind. A group of warriors who held onto their assegaïs instead of hurling them, and who moved right up to the enemy behind the shelter

of a barrier of shields would have its opponents at its mercy and would be able to accomplish complete victory. Having proved the advantages of the new tactics, Shaka armed his warriors with short-handled stabbing spears and trained them to move up to their opponents in close formation with their body-length cowhide shields forming an almost impenetrable barrier to anything thrown at them.

The formation most generally used was crescent-shaped. A number of regiments extending several ranks deep formed a dense body known as the chest (*isifuba*), while on each side a regiment moved forward forming the horns. As the horns curved inward around the enemy, the main body would advance killing all those who could not break through the encompassing lines.

Discipline. Shaka built up his forces by means of much drilling and discipline, soon making them the terror of the land. To secure greater mobility, Shaka prohibited the wearing of sandals and toughened his warriors' feet by making them run barefoot over rough thorny ground. His war cry was "Victory or death!" and he kept his *impi* on continuous military campaigns until he thought they had earned the right to wear the headring (*isicoco*) of manhood. They were then formally dissolved and allowed to marry.

The male amabutho. The young men were taken away to be enrolled alongside others from all sections of the kingdom in an appropriate *amabutho*, or age-regiment. This produced a sense of common identity among them. Each of these *amabutho* had its own name and was lodged at one of the royal households, which became military communities as well as retaining their traditional functions. Each military settlement had a herd of royal cattle assigned to it, from which the young men were supplied with meat. The hides of the cattle were used to provide the shields of the warriors and an attempt was made to select cattle with distinctive skin colouring for each *amabutho*.

The female amabutho. Young women of the kingdom were assembled in groups at the military settlements. Officially, they were wards of the king. They were

organized in female equivalents of the male *amabutho* and took part in ceremonial dancing and displays. When one of the male *amabutho* was given permission to marry, a female *amabutho* would be broken up and the women given out as brides to the warriors. Until such time, however, sexual intercourse between members of the male and female age regiments was forbidden. Transgressions were punished by death.

The royal women. Each settlement contained a section of royal women headed by a formidable woman, usually one of Shaka's aunts. Shaka, however, dreaded producing a legitimate heir. He never married and women found pregnant by him were put to death. His households were thus not dominated by wives but by stern senior women of the royal family. In the king's absence, administrative authority was wielded jointly by the female ruler of the settlement and by an *induna* who was usually a favourite of the king. The military system thus helped develop a strong sense of identity in the kingdom as a whole.

The traditional leaders of the subject chiefdoms still held local administrative authority, and on the dissolution of the *amabutho*, the young men would return to live in their community of origin. Thus, the sense of identity of these subject chiefdoms was not entirely lost, but remained an important element in the later politics of the Zulu kingdom.

The military indunas or captains, as trusted favourites of the king, received many cattle from him and were able to build up large personal followings. These developments resulted in the evolution of powerful figures in later reigns with strong local power bases that they had been able to build up because of royal appointments and favours.

KwaBulawayo. Shaka's first capital was on the banks of the Mhodi, a small tributary of the Mkhumbane River in the Babanango district. He named his great place *KwaBulawayo* (at the place of the murder). As his kingdom grew, he built a

far bigger *KwaBulawayo*, a royal household of about 1,400 huts, in the Mhlathuze valley, some 27 km from the present town of Eshowe.

Economic and social changes. The development of the military system caused major economic and social changes. That so much youth was concentrated at the royal barracks resulted in a massive transfer of economic potential to a centralized state. However, the cattle wealth of the whole community throughout the kingdom was greatly improved; even though most of the herds were owned by the king, his chiefs and *indunas*, all shared in the pride roused by the magnificence of the royal herds as well as the pride of belonging to the unequalled military power of the Zulu.

Effects of Shaka's wars. His wars were accompanied by great slaughter and caused many migrations. Their effects were felt even far north of the Zambezi River. Because they feared Shaka, leaders such as Zwangendaba, Mzilikazi, and Shoshangane moved northwards, far into the central African interior, and in their turn sowed war and destruction before developing their own kingdoms.

Some estimate that during his reign, Shaka caused the death of more than a million people. Shaka's wars between 1818 and 1828 contributed to a series of forced migrations known in various parts of southern Africa as the *Mfecane*, *Difaqane*, *Lifaqane*, or *Fetcani*. Groups of refugees from Shaka's assaults, first Hlubi and Ngwane clans, later followed by the Mantatise and the Matabele of Mzilikazi, crossed the Drakensberg to the west, smashing chiefdoms in their paths. Famine and chaos followed the wholesale extermination of populations and the destruction of herds and crops between the Limpopo and the Gariep River. Old chiefdoms vanished and new ones were created.

With the arrival of European traders in Natal in 1823, Shaka extended his hospitality. He granted trading rights and land around Port Natal, about 160 km south of his capital, guBuluwayo. He also requested that the foreigners teach his people their language so that they could communicate for their mutual benefit.

Shaka recognized that the settlers, who had come to trade and conquer, were powerful. He sent a number of his men to travel to Europe to be educated. They never reached Europe, but were kept at the Cape for unknown reasons and denied any education.

In 1827 Shaka's mother, Nandi, passed away. In his deranged grief he embarked on a campaign of destruction, issuing a decree that all pregnant women and their husbands be killed. Altogether about 7,000 Zulus died during this period. Shaka even ordered the killing of all lactating cows, so that even calves could share his loss.

His reign only lasted until 1828. He sent his warriors on a raid to the south and on their return, immediately ordered them to the far north. This was the last straw for his exhausted followers. His half-brothers, Dingaan (Dingane, Udingane) and Mhlangana, who had never forgotten that he was not their rightful ruler, instructed his *induna*, Mbopa, to stab him. He died on 22 September 1828, in Stanger, KwaZulu Natal. Although fatally wounded, Shaka correctly prophesised to his brothers that they would never rule over the Zulus and that they would instead be ruled by the white settlers.

Much of what we know about Shaka comes from the accounts of the first white adventurers, who established a settlement at Port Natal (modern-day Durban) in 1824. Predominantly British, they thrived under Shaka's protection, hunting for ivory, and trading with the Zulu kingdom. In return, they created in their writings the image of Shaka as a bloodthirsty despot, which has lingered to this day, seeking to blacken his reputation as a means of justifying their own less reputable activities.

By 1827, Shaka held central Zululand (between the Black Mfolozi river in the north, and the Thukela in the south) firmly under his control. Beyond that, his influence was patchy, and he certainly looked to extend his control further south. He moved his capital to kwaDukuza (modern-day Stanger) and sent his armies

raiding into southern Natal. While some Chiefdoms nearer the Thukela accepted his authority, others retired to natural strongholds to resist him, while yet others simply abandoned their traditional lands to move out of his way. The Zulu kingdom grew extraordinarily rich on cattle captured during this period of almost constant military activity.

By 1828, however, there were signs that Shaka was losing his grip on his kingdom. He survived one assassination attempt, and used the death of his mother as an excuse to purge internal opposition. An attempt to open up diplomatic communications with the British at the Cape proved an embarrassing failure. Then, on 24 September 1828, he fell victim to a palace coup, orchestrated by his brothers Dingane and Mhlangana, who were the only ones willing to challenge the awesome aura Shaka had created around himself. They took advantage of a rare lapse in security to pounce on him as he received an envoy from the amaMpondo people, and stabbed him to death.

As he died, a popular legend has it that he prophesied that his successors would lose his kingdom, 'for the land will see white men come'. The following lines describe the legend that changed the history of South Africa:

7.5 Poetry in motion

Stanza 1 Verse

1. *Kobekgolo ya Mozulu mathata*
2. *Batho ba yone ba ntse ba sa botha*
3. *Batho ba yone ba tletse lefatshe*
4. *Ba bolailwe e seng ka dimpa di kgotshe*
5. *Mozulu yo o tlhomile a dira sekai*
6. *E le tselanyana e sa welweng ditlai*
7. *Segai sa gagwe sa gabaka batho*
8. *Tšhaka ya rema dikgata tsa batho*
9. *Ya phunya mogodu wa lesea tharing*
10. *Ya runa letsetse le nta moriring*

That towering Zulu spear is trouble
 His adherents are still in idleness
 His proselytes are spread all over the land
 They have been massacred with empty stomachs
 That Zulu was setting an unforgettable norm
 He was like a feared hazardous path
 His assegai pulverised people
 The spear crushed people's skulls
 It drilled the unborn baby's stomach in the womb
 Demolishing the lice and the fleas in the hair

Raditladi describes Shaka as a towering person from his physical structure and presence. *Kobe* in Setswana is a barbed spear, a long, stabbing weapon for thrusting or throwing, consisting of a wooden shaft to which a sharp-pointed head, as of iron or steel, is attached. Raditladi uses a powerful metaphor by comparing a person with a spear, which happens again to be his real name. In Setswana there is a proverb, *Leina lebe seromo (Leina le ya boreelelong)* an equivalent of the English proverb "give a dog a bad name and hang him". Shaka's character or personality depicts a real spear. *Batho ba yona ba ntse ba sa botha* means that his people are spread all over as a result of his terror. A good example is that of the people called Kokolo (Makololo), who had been driven away by Shaka in the early 1820s and were on the run until the 1830s when they moved with their cattle into territory that had belonged to the Lozi, along the upper Zambezi River. They were aggressive and militarily superior to the Lozi, and they conquered the Lozi. Like other conquerors, they kept local political relations in place, becoming overlords, while some of Lozi royalty fled northward. They taxed the Lozi, turned some into agricultural slaves and sold others to slave traders in exchange for more guns. The Lozi society became

more cattle oriented, and the Kokolo went on regular cattle raids against the Ila people to their east (Shillington1989:245).

The Kololo were less successful at suppressing subversion than the Spartans had been. The Lozi royalty sneaked back and in 1864 led an uprising against the oppression that annihilated or scattered the Kokolo. Elements of the Kokolo language, Sikololo, and cattle raising remained with the Lozi (Shillington1989:245).

Batho ba yone ba tletse lefatshe refers to people who fled Zululand as a result of terror. Mzilikazi of the Amandebele, Mswati of the Swati and Shoshangane come to mind. The Ndebele, after escaping Shaka's wrath, were also driven northward by the Boers and settled on the Zimbabwe plateau in the 1840s. There, with their Zulu-style regiments and fighting methods, they overran peoples called Sotho and Shona – the latter were already weakened from attacks by the Ngoni from the north of the Zambezi River. The Ndebele expected tribute (taxes) from those they had overrun, and they raided those who were late in payment.

To the north of the Zimbabwe plateau, along the Zambezi River in Portuguese East Africa, were the Prazeros and their slave-soldiers. The Prazeros were mainly black but proud of their mixed Portuguese heritage. They were estate owners and overlords, expecting subordinate farmers to support them and their armies. With the decline of the Maravi Empire in the 1700s, the Prazeros gained control over the ivory trade, and in the mid-1800s, well-armed with guns and without a powerful state to oppose them, they extended their hunting and raiding 480 km (300 miles) inland from the coast (Shillington1989).

Following this victory, Shaka went on to subdue neighbouring tribes, ruling and conquering until his name inspired fear in his opponents, many of whom fled. This period is referred to as the *Mfecane*, or "crushing". He dominated the powerful Ndwandwe and Qwabe people, and then the confederation of Nguni clans to the south. Their lands were destroyed and their villages torched. *Ba*

bolailwe e seng ka dimpa di kgotshe survivors, like the Mfengu, travelled south, where they met the Xhosa, and finally settled in the Cape. *Mozulu yo o tlhomile a dira sekai* by inventing a new method of warfare. He replaced the throwing spear with a long bladed, short-handled stabbing assegai, forcing close combat. He refined the organization of warriors, providing each regiment with a strong identity including markings and regalia. He saw that the traditional type of spear, a long-handled assegai thrown from a distance, was no good for the regulated fighting in close formation he had in mind; *Segai sa gagwe sa gabaka batho* meaning his assegai crushed people and killed babies in the stomach. By the line *Tšhaka ya rema dikgata tsa batho*, Raditladi uses a word play or pun on a transliteration of the Zulu *shaka* (a bug) to the Setswana *Tšhaka* (a spear). Raditladi manipulates language to bring good sound and deeper meaning. In using the phrase, *Ya phunya mogodu wa lesea tharing*, Raditladi illustrates how merciless and cruel Shaka was. It is on record that after his mother's death Shaka becomes openly psychotic. Thousands are killed in the initial paroxysm of his grief ... All pregnant women were slain with their husbands. While the phrase *Ya runa letsetse le nta moriring* suggests that Shaka left no stone unturned in his invasions. Within a year, Shaka had quadrupled the number of his subjects and army members by absorbing conquered groups into his Zulu nation. Within a decade, Shaka had accumulated an army of 50,000 warriors, defeated all of the surrounding tribes, and was master over most of the interior of what is now South Africa.

Shaka has often been portrayed as a ruthless psychopath and despot. While this is clearly not true, as he was openly affectionate to his female relatives, for example, supported his father's sons, despite the fact that they posed a political threat, and had many friends among his warriors, he was undoubtedly a ruthless leader who knew the value of terror as a tool of state-craft. He imposed a whole new state superstructure over his conglomerate kingdom, made up as it was of chiefdoms with very different aims and aspirations; he could not have done it by relying on diplomacy alone. Political enemies were often executed on trumped-up

charges – usually of witchcraft – while dissident groups were regularly purged (Shillington 1989; Robert 1992 & Penell 2000)

Stanza 2 Verse

1. *Matsibogwana a nna bophalaphala*
2. *Madi a tlatatlala a tlabisa kgala*
3. *Taukgolo ya kona batho dihuba*
4. *Ba tlhoka go mmolelela ditšhaba*
5. *Ntša tsa gabalatsega ditlharapa*
6. *Tsa baa tsa namalatsa nko di dupa.*
7. *Tšhaka, o ka bo a rebotse Mathosa*
8. *Ga ba kitla ba kgona go go losa*
9. *O ka bo o ba reboletse go tshela*
10. *Batlhanka ba kgwadibane ba phela*

Drifts of rivers were overflowing

Blood spilling everywhere in a shameful way

The big lion twisted people's chests

People were unable to spread his vision

The dogs were stretching out for dry branches

They also tried to reach out by smelling

Tšhaka should have left the Xhosas alone

They could not afford to attack you

You should have allowed them to live

So that servants of the sea turtle could live

Raditladi might be referring to the war in 1819 when Zwide mounted a serious invasion of Zulu territory, which Shaka met with scorched-earth tactics. He retired before the Ndwandwe army, luring them deeper and deeper into Zulu territory, until at last, exhausted and hungry, they began to retreat. Then he attacked them as they struggled across the upper reaches of the Mhlatuze valley, near modern

Eshowe. By *Matsibogwana a nna bophalaphala*, Raditladi compares water, which was flowing in the valley, with blood that was shed in the war. As they were fighting near the river, wounded and dead soldiers fell into the river. The colour of the water changed to red. It was as if the Mhlatuze River was overflowing with blood. Raditladi uses consonance and alliteration to good effect. In this line, *Madi a tlalatlala a tlhabisa kgala*, Raditladi has repeats the vowel /a/ eleven times to demonstrate the shameful scene of blood spilling everywhere. This symbolizes treacherous and cold blood killings. Repetition of the sound /tl/ in the same line stands for the pain and suffering of the wounded. After a brutal battle in which Zulu and Ndwandwe corpses are said to have piled up thickly on top of one another, the Ndwandwe broke. *Go kona banna dihuba* suggests "to render them ineffective". Men were unable to continue with the fight, they had been conquered. Raditladi continues to suggest that Shaka could have stopped killing people and annexed them peacefully so that he could become popular. Shaka's soldiers, symbolized as hunting dogs, left no stone unturned. *Ntša tsa gabalatsega ditlharapa* means they were searching everywhere in the bushes for enemies who might have hidden themselves in fear of death. Like hunting dogs that use their power of smell to look for small animals, *Tsa baa tsa namalatsa nko di dupa*, the soldiers were sniffing the grass and branches of the tree to clean the veldt. Shaka followed his victory with a rapid sweep through Ndwandwe territory, which destroyed all traces of resistance. King Zwide and many of his supporters fled; those who remained accepted Shaka's authority.

Tšhaka, o ka bo a rebotse Mathosa means he could have left them alone and not incorporated them like he did with other groups. *O ka bo o ba reboletse go tshela* suggests that they were massacred. Survivors like the Mfengu, travelled south, where they met the Xhosa, and finally settled in the Cape. For eighteen years Shaka was Emperor and King of Natal and Zululand, and the first King to rule from Pongola to the Cape.

1. *Kgabo e kile ya atolola lenaga*
2. *Ya phunyega jaaka phefo ya mariga*
3. *Merole ya tetesela melapong*
4. *Kgabo ya tsena mathaka marapong*
5. *Ba gakwa fela, ba etsa maatlhamana,*
6. *Go thibela mmofelela go tsena*
7. *Banna ba sitwa ba ama direpodi*
8. *Ba sitwa le ke go gama dipodi*
9. *Ba re di fusitse ba sa di thetsa*
10. *Ka letshogo dilo le di retetsa*

A flame once swept the veldt
 Piercing like cold wind of winter
 Calves were shivering next to river beds
 The flame penetrated into people's bones
 [People]They were deranged as if foolish
 To protect themselves against cold
 Men were cold when tending the threshold
 Were unable to milk goats
 And said they ceased to give milk before cuddling them
 As fear prevents things to happen

Raditladi compares Shaka with flames of wildfire that destroys the veldt; *Kgabo e kile ya atolola lenaga*. Wildfire first of all is a natural phenomenon that has been occurring since there was an atmosphere and vegetation with low moisture content to burn. The most common natural wildfire catalyst is lightening. Natural wildfires are accidental, with the rare exception of arson. Wildfires are dangerous and fearful. They are unpredictable and capricious. Raditladi compares Shaka with wildfire because he was unpredictable. People were living in fear not knowing when he would strike and from which direction. To his enemy, Chaka was like an

unwanted fire that destroys families and cattle. To his enemy, he was like wildfire damaging shrubs or grass. He was feared like a lightning that burns the forest. Raditladi uses simile to compare the wildfire with the wind; *Ya phunyega jaaka phefo ya mariga*. Here he describes the speed, the sound and the sting of the fire. Wind has similar characteristics of movement, echo and soreness. Hence during the winter when the grass becomes yellowish brown, it is said it has been burned by cold wind. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that wildfires are also fanned by the wind hence the comparison is not in vain.

It should be noted though, that Raditladi compares two objects and then compares both objects with Shaka at the same time. This is to say Shaka is as fearful as the wildfire and as frightful as the piercing wind. As the poem unfolds, Raditladi makes more emphasis of the piercing wind as *Merole ya tetesela melapong* means calves were shivering as a result of the cold weather. Again Raditladi creates a symbol within a symbol. The calves were also frightened because, after defeating the owners, Shaka would confiscate the cattle. People and animals were in terrible shock. Men were unable to perform their daily chores such as suckling the goats. This shows the extent of confusion and bewilderment among people and animals as a result of fright.

1. *Batho bangwe ba šwafolašwafola*
2. *Ba dira jaaka matlhalerwa fela*
3. *Ba phura batho ba etsa dibatana*
4. *Tšhaka yaagwe e kgethanya marena*
5. *Kgosikgolo o ka bo o sa ba kgekgetha*
6. *Wa gataka maoto a batho ba kgetha*
7. *Wa gapa tse di makoro di lema.*
8. *O koo o editse Mosotho le Kgama*
9. *O kabo jaanong o agetswe moduku*
10. *Ka lefikantswe le le kgabuduku*

Some people were pulling others forcefully
 Emulating the wild dogs
 Crushing people just like beasts
 His spear is very selective on leaders
 The great one, you shouldn't have slaughtered them
 Trampling over people who were paying taxes
 By confiscating ploughing cattle
 You should have emulated Mosotho and Kgama
 You would be having a monument
 A memorable precious gravestone

Raditladi compares Shaka's soldiers to wild dogs that pull their prey in all directions after killing it. He also compares the soldiers with beasts that kill people and feed on their meat. He also claims that Shaka was selective when waging attacks, for example, powerful and tactical leaders such as Mantatise and Moshweshwe were avoided by Shaka's warriors. Raditladi also blames Shaka for attacking tribes that were leading a peaceful existence. He suggests that it was unnecessary for him to annex tribes who had their own structures, with their own traditional leaders. Such tribes were subjected under the Zulu Kingdom. As it was the practice of the day to capture cattle after defeating an enemy, Shaka did the same as well, leaving the vanquished with nothing to continue their livelihood. Raditladi wishes Shaka could have been as humane and warm to his people as Kgama and Moshweshwe were. The contributions made by Kgama and Moshweshwe are so huge that the Batswana and Basotho established monuments to recognize their benevolence.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with poetry that explores the conflict and rivalry during the events that changed the world and set new boundaries in Africa and the world. Raditladi reveals the effect of wars in Africa and throughout the world. The soldiers and civilians were injured or killed in the war. People fled their territories and new settlements were found.

Raditladi paints a picture of leaders that were driven by power and ambition such as Hitler, Mussolini and Shaka. While in Africa *Mfecane/Difecane* led to the establishment of kingdoms such as the AmaSwazi, Amandebele and AmaShangane, the world conflict divided the world into Western and Eastern blocks, and the Western powers that triumphed over Germany were compensated.

Again Raditladi draws a line between exemplary leaders, such as Moshweshwe and Kgama, and the much feared Hitler, Mussolini and Shaka.

CHAPTER 8

8.1. Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher will reminisce on what has been achieved in this study. The aim is to point out the findings of this research and indicate the contributions of that the study. The second portion of the chapter suggests possible future research directions. Before the findings are revealed, it is appropriate to provide the framework that prompted this study.

African languages and cultures were oppressed by the colonial powers and under the apartheid system. The cultural impact on the subjugated languages and literatures has been felt for several centuries. In 1994, South Africa was liberated from white domination and oppression and there appeared to be a political possibility to regain the African history and culture, which are an integral part of African languages and literatures that represent a rich heritage. To regain the resources contained in the indigenous South African languages, iSindebele, Sesotho sa Leboa, Sesotho, siSwati, Xitsonga, Setswana, Tshivenda, isiXhosa and isiZulu were declared official languages alongside English and Afrikaans. It was also resolved that conditions should be created for their development and the promotion of their equal use and enjoyment.

This provision regularizes and aims to normalize the language situation in the country. It ushers in unprecedented interest in the learning of African languages. This study aligns itself with Ngara's general philosophy and argument that "the desirable way forward is one that embraces the pragmatic principle that the African university should teach what is truly useful to African humanity; what elevates African culture and whatever enables Africa to play her part in world affairs

and a meaningful role in the community of nations" (Ngara cited in Kashoki 1994:66).

For the languages to regain and retain their importance in the culture, they need the institutionalized support of society. For example, the designation of Setswana as an official language is crucial as its future success relies not only on the increased prestige that the official status brings, but also on the basic institutions. A central role in the implementation of any language policy is that played by the educational system. This means that the status of the language in teaching, especially at pre-school and primary school level, is crucial. The status of the language is further affected by its wider use within education e.g. at university level. The commitment at tertiary level plays a significant practical and symbolic role in the development and promotion of a language.

It is therefore essential to define the role of the languages and literature within education and evaluate the effects that the changed language policy has had on education. It is in school, during the primary and secondary socialization of the child, that the seeds are sown for the future of the mother tongue. It is therefore the most efficient institution to be used as a means of speeding up language shift and linguistic as well as cultural mainstreaming. Mainstreaming in Africa means adopting American and European culture traits, thus distancing Africa from its own heritage. The retention and maintenance of African languages within the educational sphere, is one of the most crucial ways of closing the gap between today's society and one that mainstreams its own cultural heritage with the reservoirs of indigenous knowledge embedded therein.

The former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, re-popularized African renaissance in the political arena. In his speech, quoted in chapter five, he depicts an "African" as containing in himself multitudes; a person who is truly African is truly multicultural. The speech itself incorporates a blend of South

Africa's diverse cultural heritages. Nonetheless, people are tight-lipped about the relationship between language and renaissance. As the researcher hopes to have demonstrated in this study, language is one of the most significant vehicles through which Africans can reinstate and cultivate their culture, philosophy and wisdom.

"Renaissance" means "rebirth, reincarnation, regeneration, renewal, resurgence or charting a new beginning". No society will ever renew itself if it works outside its own linguistic memory. The European Renaissance included disengagement from Latin and the rediscovery of the vernacular languages. When the European Union was formed, language was also at the centre. At the basic conceptual level, the Euro-mosaic project set out to clarify the survival and use of minority languages as processes of reproduction, production and non-production of languages. The aim was to embrace all the members of the union and not to subject them to the use of English.

Renaissance must come out of a people's psyche. It must come from the guardians or caretakers of the language. This means that African people must produce knowledge in African languages and also translate material from other languages into their own languages. For African languages to be relevant and avoid isolation, Africans should translate from different European and Asian languages into their own African languages. Many Africans have already written in European languages such as French and English. Efforts should now be made to translate these works into African languages. The Department of African languages at UNISA has translated Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Mandela's *Long Walk to Freedom* and Zakes Mda's plays into various African languages. The ultimate significance of this exercise depends on whether this material will be read and used at schools.

Some countries, such as Botswana, are already taking African languages seriously. The production of Setswana novels, drama, poetry and short stories has increased. There are newspapers and magazines where Setswana is used alongside English. This is not enough, as Setswana should stand on its own. It is also regrettable that the popular newspaper *Mokgosi*, has folded due to lack of funds. *Mokgosi* was the only newspaper in Botswana that was written in Setswana. It is disappointing to observe that the situation has not changed since Plaatje's time, around a hundred years ago, when his newspaper also folded because of financial problems; *Plus ça change plus c'est la même chose*. For an African, it is in some respects absurd to speak about the postcolonial or post-apartheid era, at least to the extent that economic wherewithal remains largely in the hands of the former oppressor, and the political powers that be have not the capacity (and sometimes not the commitment) to make language equality a reality for South Africa. This is the time for Africans to recover their historical memory and African legacy. How can this be done when Africans do not take the lead?

The African people ought to reinvent their languages and cultures like all liberated people have done. They ought to teach their children to learn to master their mother tongue and encourage them to express their ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively in an African language.

The aim of literature is to introduce students to the linguistic, literary and cultural aspects of their people in respect of the present, past and future. Introducing students to the literary and cultural heritage of their people, both traditional and modern, is an important component in their development. Moreover, literature derives from life itself, thus it can potentially teach students about life.

Language is a carrier of culture and, through it, different generations of the social group communicate with one another across the epochs. Marivate (1992) quotes

Chilivumbo (1976:139) who says: 'Language is a mechanism through which cultural forms are assumed, assimilated and acquired'

Chilivumbo shows the oneness of language and culture. The process of assimilating a language, therefore, is a process of assimilating the culture of that language. Culture is the sum total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge of a specific social group. Doc Bikitsha (1993:16) writes:

*...each day we steel (or should steel) ourselves
for life's snares by dipping into our fore-bearers
treasure trove of idioms and proverbs.*

There is a wealth of traditional literature stored in African languages, such as the following: *myths* that explain the origin of death, marriage and food-stuffs; *riddles* that test one's power of observation and experience in general; *idioms* that render abstract ideas and concepts in a more concrete and practical manner; *songs* whose words mirror the life of the people as do other branches of traditional literature; *proverbs* that embody the distilled and collective experience of the community. For instance, if Africans had hearkened to the wisdom of their forebears that *Sedikwa ke ntšwa pedi ga se thata* (To be encircled by two dogs is to be overcome/defeated), an analogy drawn from hunting that means two hands are better than one; we would have long triumphed over our oppressors of many centuries. The oppressed would have realised that unity is strength.

It is also significant that African languages can help to establish human dignity. African humanism, known as *ubuntu/botho*, is also embodied in the African languages. Many researchers, including the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), believe that *ubuntu* is necessary for a better South Africa. Whereas the Eurocentric perspective focuses on aggressive, individual self-achievement, the Afrocentric concept of *ubuntu* expects the successful individual to share his success

with the community and not to achieve at the expense of the community. The concept of *ubuntu* also encapsulates a communal relationship or *group existence*, which is an important feature of African societies. The Setswana proverb *Motho ke motho ka batho ba bangwe* means that we coexist and are interdependent; "My being and meaning in the world can only be fulfilled by the being of the other". This implies the recognition of the otherness of the other. Literary works in African languages also postulate group existence, i.e. the importance of the being of others. It would be useful if other world communities could endeavour to emulate this humanizing tradition, which is the cultural fabric and ethos of the African people.

Another Setswana proverb *Bana ba motho ba gaogana tlhogo wa tsie* (literally, the head of a locust? Which would be just a bite.), which means, family shares the little they have, reflecting the communal character of the community.

These are just a few traditional African values that are embedded in the language which would, if retained, obviate huge social and other problems plaguing our society, such as the present shocking phenomenon of abusing pre-teen girls.

8.1.1. Recapitulation

The study explicated the social, historical and cultural identity of the Batswana as portrayed by Raditladi's poetry in *Sefalana sa monate*.

8.1.1.1. Social aspect

The study focused on the social issue that has been the fabric of Batswana life from time immemorial, and unearthed tribulations that brought about change in the South African social landscape about fifty to sixty years ago. For the Batswana "intergenerational" was the time of traditional marriages, arranged and internal, versus modern love relationships and choosing a mate for oneself. On the one hand enculturation occurs. Batswana marriage is a social contract between families versus Western norms that endorse individual person-to-person love. The study deals specifically with traditional love and marriage versus modern troubadour love. The issue of marriage is fundamental to any society, and traditional societies are renowned for their practice of arranged marriages. In many societies, this was part of their culture.

The Batswana and other societies who practised arranged marriages thought that the selection of a wife was too important a decision to be left in the hands of inexperienced youths, because males and females had little contact with each other at the time. Parents, who were presumed to have experience, needed to help their children find a mate who was appropriate to their family.

In addition to being part of their culture, arranged marriages are still seen as being better for young people today, as they result in lasting marriages. There are instances of troubadour love where the in-laws reject the child's partner or vice-versa. In such instances, as it is often the case, marriages end up in divorce. Proponents of arranged marriages believe that any relationship that is not based on a sound foundation is doomed to fail. Nowadays, couples marry and live far away from their support structure, which is the family.

In Raditladi's time, the belief was still rife that *Mosadi tshwene o jewa mabogo*, meaning that the looks should not be the determining factor; one should marry a

hardworking woman, who will be able carry out the duties of the household with aplomb. Accordingly, the proponents felt that troubadour love was based on physical beauty, especially facial appearance and body shape, age and health. The proverb *bontle bo na le dibebebejane* was aimed at educating people not to be fooled by physical beauty, as it poses a danger. The parents of the bride will also look for a man who is assiduous, meticulous and who will be able to take good care of their daughter. The proverb *monna tlou o jewa marota* means that a real man is the one who provides and protects his family.

What comes out of Raditladi's poetry is that the young people of the time wanted change but were afraid to hurt their conservative parents and other members of the family by choosing their own partners. The person who was brave enough to choose his own partner was still trapped in cultural constraints, as the new practice was not based on tested principles. In Raditladi's poem for example, the protagonist has opted to choose a partner but still wishes for a partner who fulfilled the traditional role of a wife.

8.1.1.2 Culture aspects

The study of culture explored the motif of cattle in terms of intertextuality between language, culture, proverb and poetry. This is a natural phenomenon because the Setswana primarily function in the realm of orality and because the language preserves extensive use of proverbs, even in everyday usage. Language carries culture and as such, there is continuity between language, proverb, poetry and other creative works in Setswana. Cattle pervade Batswana life and imagination, touching the sensations, the emotions and the imagination, and hence run as a thread connecting language, proverb, poetry, history, and cultural norms.

Speaking of education in Egypt, Hilliard writes: "Heavy use was made of proverbs, songs and stories. Direct or symbolic lessons were drawn through these." (Hilliard in Mazama (ed.) 2003:277). "It was the fundamental belief in the unity or interconnectedness of all things that made the use of analogies such a powerful pedagogical tool. As we know, the use of proverbs and analogies permeate African and African diasporan culture today." (ibid:277). Racist psychologists accuse the blacks of being incapable of abstract thinking, which is precisely the kind of abstract thinking that is reflected in proverbs and analogies! (Hilliard 2003:277). These analogies are born of experience and observation, just as proverbs were born in the veldt, at the cattle post and the hunt. Analogy, in the ancient Egyptian setting, was based upon the acquisition of wisdom, or oneness with the cosmic order (ibid).

Analogy is based upon similarity among things, which contrasts with Western thinking, which, since the end of the 16th century, has constructed knowledge not through looking for semblance among things, but rather through identifying differences (as cited in Willinsky 1998:113). This thinking suited the needs of Europe and compared them favourably to the "savage" who was encountered on voyages of discovery. Other forms of analogy can be derived from culture, such as architecture, the layout of homes, beadwork, dance, and festivals. A Setswana proverb *Letlhaku le lešwa le agelelwa mo go la bogologolo* (mending the fence with new thorn branches) has the analogous meaning that the young should imbibe the wisdom of the elders by living in close community with them.

8.1.1.3 Historical aspects

The history of the Batswana is portrayed by the headship of two outstanding Batswana leaders Kgosi Kgama and Isang Pilane. Lewis Turco, quoted by Harold Scheub, says "in order to write poetry, one must have some kind of language system, or prosody – a theory of poetry composition or organizing principle – with

the bounds of which one can build the structure of the poem". (2002:11). Scheub (2002) argues that African oral historical poetry has often been misunderstood by critics outside the culture who fail to discern that it is composed by structures of feeling and for whom the metaphorical and cultural allusions are difficult to interpret. Aspects, such as chronology, that are so important to the Western historian and Western mind, are not important in the composition of oral historical poetry (Scheub 2002:24). What we find in Raditladi is a balance between Western and Batswana priorities (poetic sensibilities). For example, he eulogizes Kgosi Kgama as would a traditional praise poet, but also implicitly compares him to important Christian figures, elevating him simultaneously for military, socio-economic, political and religious leadership. One is conscious of the structures of feeling in Raditladi's composition e.g. one can tangibly feel the poet's love, admiration and respect of Kgama, and at the same time, the poem includes and outlines the main events and achievements of Kgama III's life, and makes a reference to the time of his death in 1923.

The study has elucidated Raditladi's skill in blending Western and Batswana priorities, poetic sensibilities, and Western and Batswana cultural norms and values. Historical stories, no matter how exaggerated, elaborated upon and embellished, create a feeling about the figures in history, and as such, provide a context for understanding history (Scheub 1996). Scheub suggests that mythmakers and historians who relate past events and the lives of legendary figures, move a people to their mythic core. The researcher feels that this mythic core is "where Raditladi comes from" "who is he" his cultural identity/sensibilities, the feeling he feels when he hears Setswana music, for example. It is the researcher's contention that one of the primary purposes of oral history and praise poetry is to reinforce the feeling of belonging and of nation-hood; in Raditladi's case, of being a *Mongwato*. The first poem, *Kgosi Kgama*, refers to various historical events in the life of Kgama III.

The inclusion of WW1 in Raditladi's anthology was done in order to re-state the role of Africans in that war.. Historians from all walks of life tend to undermine Africa and its role in world events. Raditladi's aim with the poem was to put the record straight. It is a pity that the African states were requested to cooperate with Britain during the war, because when the European countries were compensated by the treaty, the African states received absolutely nothing. Many African soldiers paid dearly in the European war. They lost their cattle, goats and sheep and their farms were neglected. Some families lost their loved ones and could not even trace their graves if ever they were buried.

The story of Africa is incomplete without including Shaka Zulu, a military genius, theoretician and master tactician who changed the course of history. Unfortunately, Raditladi has portrayed Shaka as a monster who killed people mercilessly. Raditladi emphasizes that Shaka had built the Zulu into a great warlike nation. He paints Shaka as a person who unleashed waves of destruction that left enormous stretches of country uninhabited by people. Raditladi adds to what is recorded in history by saying that the *Mfekane* unleashed by Shaka led to the annihilation of literally hundreds of tribes. Known as "the Black Napoleon", Shaka soaked Southern Africa in blood, devastating countless kraals during his era.

8.2. Possible future research directions

Raditladi's poetry, like any other good poetry, is made up of symbols, signs, sign systems and processes of meaning. For the reader to understand Raditladi's poetry, he/she ought to identify and interpret the signs to understand their potential communicative function. According to Lotman (1990:103), a symbol, as commonly understood, involves the idea of a context, which in turn serves as an expression level for another context, one which is as a rule more highly valued in that culture. He furthermore explains that symbols are important mechanisms of

cultural memory; they can transfer texts, plot outlines and other semiotic formations, from one level of cultural memory to another.

The first important sign that Raditladi uses is the title of his anthology *Sefalana sa menate* (granary of niceties). In Batswana culture, *sefalana* is something that is highly valued. Traditionally, it was used to store corn and mealies, which could be used during times of drought. Today, rural people who still have granaries for corn and mealies, use them to store their modern valuables, such as birth, death and marriage certificates, and traditional clothing. In modern times, the food that is stored is sometimes sent to war-torn African countries, such as Zimbabwe, Burundi and Rwanda, in times of need. *Sefalana*, as used in the title of Raditladi's collection of poems, becomes a symbol, understood by Batswana readers to represent things that are valued highly in their lives. In the olden days, it was the corn and mealies that could save them from famine, and in the context of Raditladi's poems, it refers to the simpler lifestyle of yesteryear on the farm with the daily activities of milking the cows, ploughing the fields, chasing/hunting the wild animals, dancing around the fire in the evenings, and wearing traditional clothes (as evoked in his poem *Fatshe la Batswana*). It might be said that Raditladi's "granary" becomes a symbol for the warmth, security, and feeling of belonging he experienced growing up in the Batswana culture. A granary is firmly established in Batswana cultural memory, and even in a modern location one can typically find a communal granary. Even a modern Motswana reader of Raditladi's poetry knows by the title that the poems are about his/her Batswana culture.

Within the broad spectrum of "culture" found in Raditladi's collection, is one group of poems concerning chieftainship, the most highly valued institution within the traditional Batswana culture. The poem entitled *Tau* (Lion) functions as a symbol, indicating to a Motswana reader, that the poem will deal with the chieftainship. The lion is typically a praise name for chiefs, because the qualities associated

with a lion are the very qualities expected from chiefs. The lion is brave and powerful, people and smaller animals fear it. To use the praise name *tau* is more respectful than to use a particular chief's name, because it evokes the institution of chieftainship and a long line of chiefs. Raditladi thus indicates the respect he has for the chieftainship. In the Batswana tradition, only the chief may wear the skin of the lion; attire which sets him apart from the ordinary people.

Similarly, Raditladi's poem, *Sebata* (Hairy beast), immediately signals to a Motswana reader that it is about describing chieftainship. *Sebata* (hairy beast) can refer to a number of large, extremely dangerous and ferocious wild animals, including a bear, crocodile, lion and tiger. In the case of Raditladi's poem it might refer to a bear, which is extremely dangerous; it cannot be hunted and killed because it hides in caves. The bear is a rare animal, and it is seldom that you can see or meet with the chief. Whether *sebata* refers to a bear or a lion (Matjila 1995) or a tiger, it functions in Batswana cultural memory as a symbol of the chief. One's fear of meeting a bear, such a rare and ferocious animal, which eats human flesh, is symbolic of the fear one feels in the presence of the chief. Traditionally, the chief is the only one with the authority to try cases and mete out punishment.

In the old Batswana folk tale which resembles the story of Solomon's judgement, two women go to the chief with a problem. One claims that the other accidentally killed her own baby in the night by lying on him in her sleep, and then stole her baby out of her arms as she slept. (Plaatje, 2004–6:9). The chief says he will cut the baby in half. Afraid for the life of her child, the true mother cries out for the chief to spare the child's life. In this traditional story, we can see that the chief has the power to put to death. In the old days, an unfaithful husband or wife would be sentenced to death by the chief and killed. *Sebata* like *tau*, is fixed in Batswana cultural memory as a symbol of the power and absolute authority of a chief. The evocation of *sebata* can evoke from cultural memory the folk tale just

related, which encapsulates not just the wisdom associated with the chief but also his absolute power to mete out death.

According to Lotman (2000:104), symbols are the most stable elements within cultural memory. The core group of a society's symbols go back to pre-literate times "when certain signs [...] were the condensed mnemonic programmes for the texts and stories preserved in the community's oral memory. Symbols have preserved this ability to store up extremely long and important texts in condensed form." (2000:103). Symbols stand out from the textual space "as a reminder of the ancient (or eternal) foundations of that culture." (2000:104)

In the poem, *Selelo sa Morati*, Raditladi uses the symbol that represents the Bakgatla and does not refer to them by name. He says *Boo Mabusolosa a Kgabo diruthuthwe*. The Bakgatla are also known as the *babina Kgabo* or the vervet (also known as velvet) monkey people because it is their totem. It is commonplace to hear a Mokgatla praise a fellow Mokgatla with an ode, "*Kgabo, Mokgatla a e namele setlhare e je borekhu*" (Let the Mokgatla monkey enjoy feasting on the wild gum tree. As is common among the Batswana *merafe*, the Bakgatla revere their totem, the velvet monkey, and mention it with great fondness.

Some of the poems in Raditladi's anthology such as *Selelo sa Tonki* (Donkey's appeal) are symbols themselves. The donkey is used to represent oppressed people. The donkey is lodging its grievances because it feels oppressed and exploited. The donkey is appealing to the creator after bearing maltreatment from its owners. Raditladi uses another symbol when he compares the voice of appeal of the donkey with that of *mokgweba* (a bird which belongs to the partridge family and feeds in gum trees). This bird does not produce a sound because it is suffocating with fury. This characteristic is an inborn one to *mokgweba*. Raditladi would like the readers to infer the symbolic images of sounds produced by the

bird. The donkey is appealing to God because people will not listen. Raditladi employs *ikuela* (appeal) or shouting at the top of your voice and *se/e/o* (lament) to demonstrate the pain the donkey is going through. (Moletsane 1983:9) notes that this poem can be given another interpretation looking at the setting of the poet, an area where people own others as their servants. People here are treated like donkeys even after their emancipation as slaves. The donkey in this case may be a Mosarwa.

Objects such as *letsatsi* (sun) may also be used as symbols in poetry. Raditladi uses the symbol *Fa dinaledi tsa godimo di ka nkgoa*, that is, if the stars of the heavens can call my name. The meaning of the line is simply if I can die. In another poem *Letsatsi* (stars) are symbolised:

Dikgosana kgogamasigo le kopadilalelo

Ba tlhankela sentle.

Mphatlhalatsane matlhagolatsela (Mothoagae 1990:37)

Prince Sirius and Prince Venus are of good service

Bright morning star clears the way

The stars simulate time and differentiate between day and night. The stars here are regarded as being obedient servants of the sun – the supreme being of the celestial world. Traditionally, a Motswana *kgosi* is always surrounded by servants. The servants, who also serve as bodyguards, protect their *kgosi*. Kgosi is the leader and the light of his people. If the bodyguards are not vigilant, the king may be killed. As the king rules his nation and the lion rules the animals, the sun (which is a star) is the king of the firmament. The word *tlhankela* means to serve with devotion.

Looking at the symbols such as the images and allusions used by Raditladi, one cannot ignore their similarity with the works of other poets. Raditladi grew up in

Botswana and had a short stint in South Africa when he was in high schools and at university. His poem *Fatshe la Batswana* has similar images with an Afrikaans poem *Heimwee*. Observe:

Raditladi

Van Bruggen

*Pelo ya me e kwa lefatsheng la Batswana
stilte*

My hart verlang na die

I am longing for the land of Batswana
place

I am longing for a quite

*Pelo ya me nna tota ga e mono sekgoeng
stadsgeluide*

(My hart is) Ver van die

My heart is no longer in the city
city's noise

My heart is far from the

*Pelo ya me e kgakalakgakala kwa dikgweng
velde*

My hart verlang na die

My heart is far-away in the veldt
veldt

My heart is longing for the

There is inter-textual relationship between the two texts. Both poets are having a feeling of loneliness brought back their memories as children growing up in rural areas. They are thinking of their families, friends, and their childhood when life was pure and uncomplicated. There is a strong feeling of nostalgia about their villages and all its beautiful spots. Van Bruggen is an Afrikaner who grew up in South Africa and Raditladi is a Motswana who grew up in Botswana. Raditladi, like any other author, might have fed on Van Bruggen's text, as it was published earlier than Raditladi's. Over and above the images that look alike, one is also struck by the repetition of the same sounds:

*Go utlwa dikgaka di keleketla melapong
klank van geld*

To listen to the serenading voices of guinea-fowls
sound of coins

En di klinkende

And the noisy

The two poets have used repetition of the same sound /k/ to stress similar action with contrasting meanings. On the one hand, Raditladi's repetition is used to emphasize his longing for a serene and quite environment where only natural sounds can be heard, such as the melodious sounds of birds singing. On the contrary, Van Bruggen uses the same sound to express feelings of frustration and annoyance made by noisy coins in the big city. As far as intertextual relationship is concerned, Miller in Bloom (1979:225). makes this observation:

The poem in my figure, is that ambiguous gift, food, host in the sense of victim, sacrifice. It has broken, divided, passed around, consumed by critics canny and uncanny who are in that odd relationship to one another of host and parasite. Any poem, however, is parasitical in its turn on earlier poems, or contains earlier poems within itself as enclosed parasites, in another version of perpetual reversal of parasite and host. If the poem is food and poison for the critics, it must in turn have eaten. It must have been a cannibal consumer of earlier poems

This is an illustration of how Raditladi's poetry is inhabited by a long chain of parasitical presences, echoes, allusions, and quests of previous texts, and how these parasitical presences feed upon the host and conversely, how the host also feeds upon the quest.

To recap, the various symbols that go to make up the ritual of burial in the Batswana culture are evoked by Raditladi: the cow skin to cover the corpse, the fact that the body is buried naked, and the singing of praises to honour the one

who has died. Whereas this poem indicates some of the rituals surrounding death in the Batswana culture, his other poem *Loso* (Death) appears to be less concerned with rituals in the Batswana culture and more concerned with the universal aspects of death, that is, the feelings and emotions that it evokes. It also philosophizes about death. The first verse, in particular, deals with the emotions that appear to overwhelm the poet at hearing of the death of a loved one.

Erile ke utlwa ba re o sule ka tshoga

When I heard that he was dead, I was shocked

Compare with:

O die pyn-gedagte: My kind is dood

Dit brand soos n pyn in my

Oh my heart is sore: my child is dead

It burns like a pain in me

Death in the Batswana culture, brings conflict, sorrow, uncertainty, negativity and orphans. We can infer that the poet's fear is dominated by what is going to happen. How is he going to cope with what has happened? In the phrase "*ka nyera mmoko*" (I became disheartened), the poet feels physically weak, is drained of his physical strength. He does not have the balance to stand. In the line "*ka rothisa keled*" (I dropped a tear) the poet shows how deep his grief is. In the Batswana culture, a man is not supposed to show hopelessness, as is the case with the poet here. Men are not to be seen mourning, sitting in the bedroom, they must be seen as mixing with people.

The dropping of a tear describes the state in which the poet finds himself, i.e. heartbroken because of what had happened. Only a woman is supposed to shed a tear; a man crying shows weakness and cowardice (Manyapelo 1998:44–45). Culturally, men are not supposed to show their emotions, so people might say that, in this poem, Raditladi attempts to break the cultural taboo and say that it is normal for men to feel the emotions of grief and sadness and even to express them.

J.D. du Toit in his poem *Pyngedagt* expresses similar emotions after losing his daughter. The Afrikaner men, like most other men across cultures, are not allowed to show their emotions and shed tears in public. Du Toit, like Raditladi, feels that the pain is unbearable and it is not disgraceful to cry.

Both poets have lost their beloved one and are in a gloomy atmosphere associated with death. They both describe extreme pain through the image of coagulated blood, which clogs the heart in *go tshoga* and *pyngedagt*. Du Toit uses the image of coagulated blood stuffed into his heart to portray excruciating pain emanating from the loss of a loved one and Raditladi talks of shock and disbelief after being informed of his loss. The two images complement one another in that shock and disbelief lead to pain in one's heart.

A symbol always passes from the depth of memory into text not the other way around. Moreover, the symbol acquires new life and meaning in the new text. A symbol "preserves its own semantic and structural independence" and thus can be lifted out of its semiotic context and enter a new text. It comes from the past, but it passes into the future. It is at once stable and "changed" by the "new" context.

8.3 Concluding comments

The study has made some important contributions in three respects. It has:

- illustrated the cultural identity of the Batswana as a repository of knowledge and philosophy and an understanding of values, ethos and belief systems unearthed by Setswana poetry.
- demonstrated the social fabric that binds the people together; their behaviour, thinking, ambition, desire, hope and expectations.
- explored the history of the Batswana and Africans that can be taught through the dignified genre of poetry. In short, the study has indeed shown that while Setswana poetry is functional in its thrust, it also preens itself with poetic aestheticism; and
- most importantly, the study analysed how through Raditladi's poetic imagination the Batswana people's identities constantly changed in the face of changed political contexts whether induced by local factors or external ones.

The research has also shown that Raditladi's works, like other works of art, use symbols, signs and images that need to be studied and interpreted. His works are also available for deconstructive criticism. Except what has been discussed in this research his poetry can be dissected to show the materials from which it is constructed. One way of doing this is through intertextuality, which constitutes an integral part of deconstruction. The significance of symbols in poetry warrants further research in the literature of Setswana.

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ADDENDUM

RADITLADI THROUGH THE EYES OF BYSTANDERS

This addendum is based on the pilot study conducted by Biokhutso, Keene (1985) 'The life and times of Leetile Raditaldi, 1910-1971'. The information contained in the addendum was hand written by respondents and attached to Boikhutso's research. This information was first printed by D.S. Matjila.

ADDENDUM 1

Name: Mrs S.M. Raditladi

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Monamong

Occupation: House wife

Date: 20/06/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 56

L.D. Raditladi was born [in] 1902 in Serowe. Leetile Disang Raditladi and Motsete were the first Batswana to be educated, although Raditladi received his education later. Raditladi attended a tribal school in Serowe and then proceeded to do standard six. He later went to Fort Hare where he received his BA degree. He worked as a teacher after completing school.

In 1937 as a result of the conflict between Disang and Tshekedi Khama, Disang together with his son Leetile were expelled from Serowe (Bamangwato). Disang and his son Leetile went to Mafeking in 1938 where Disang passed away. Initially Leetile was to remain in exile for 35 years before coming back home. According to the terms of exile, Leetile was supposed to come back in 1952. In 1952 Leetile

was allowed back in Bamangwato and he came to Serowe to sign with the District Commissioner and went to Francistown. [The respondent does not know what happened in Francistown]. He says in the same year 1952, Leetile became the secretary of Batawana. From here, Leetile went to Maung and became manager of WNLA in Francistown.

By October 1959 Leetile worked as a tribal secretary in Serowe. In 1960 Leetile was transferred to become subordinate chief in Tonota. Leetile hardly spent a year in Tonota because people did not accept him. From Tonota, Leetile moved to Mahalapye to become chief there (This was still in 1960). He finally died in Mahalapye.

ADDENDUM 2

Name: Gasekgale Raditladi

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Monamong

Occupation: Motor mechanic

Date: 20/06/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 31

Regiment: Letsosa

Leetile Raditladi was Tribal Secretary of the Batawana and went to Mahalapye to become a subordinate chief. He was a great writer. For example, he wrote the following books: Sefalana sa Menate, Motswasele wa I, Mokomaditlhare, among others. Leetile obtained his B.A. degree at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. When Motante formed [the] Bechuanaland Peoples' Party, Leetile formed

[the] Bechuanaland Federal Party. The party did not last long because when Seretse came back, Leetile joined Seretse's party.

Leetile had eight children with his two wives. The first wife (*mosadi wa ntlo e tona*) is a Morolong and her name is Esther. The second wife (*wa ntlo e nnye*) who stays in Mahalapye comes from Maunatlala. The names of Leetile who are still alive are as follows:

<i>Bana ba ntlo e tona</i> (first wife's children)	<i>Bana ba ntlo e nnye</i> (second wife's children)
Disang	Lebang
Besi	Goakofile (Ndobolo)
Andrew	Mojwale
Marang	Kelethokile

Leetile was the leader of the first trade union [apparently the respondent has forgotten the name of the trade union].

10th September 1951 - the first brother of Leetile died

23rd December 1951 – the second sister died.

30th November 1954 – the third brother died

Leetile died in 1971 at Mahalapye. The death of Leetile was a great loss not only to the family but also to the nation of Botswana because he was devoted to the development of Botswana. He was loved by people. He administered justice fairly in court without accepting bribery.

ADDENDUM 3

Name: Mrs M Kgari

Place of Interview: Serowe

Occupation: Housewife

Date: 21/06/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 80

Leetile was born in Serowe. He attended a tribal school and was taught by Simon [Ratshosa]. [At the] time the school was called Kgama. He went to Tiger Kloof where he was an outstanding athlete (high jumper). From there he went to Lovedale. He matriculated at Lovedale. After completing school he was sent by Kgosi Tshekeledi to carry out tribal duties (*ditiro tsa morafe*).

Leetile was exiled as a result with conflict with Tshekeledi. Tshekeledi claimed that Leetile impregnated his first wife, Bagakgametse. In addition Tshekeledi claimed that Bagakgametse poisoned Tshekeledi's mother, by the name of Semane. Actually it was not true that Leetile impregnated Bagakgametse. Leetile denied any connections with Bagakgametse and this is why he always said "*Ba mpopela kgomo ya mmopa*" meaning that the issue of adultery was taken to the tribal court; which was even attended by Kgosi Isang a Lentswe of Bakgatla.

In one of his books he refers himself as "*Motlhokagae*". In other words he is expelled from his home for a crime he has not committed. During the trial at Kgotla, Leetile publicly denied the child and said to Tshekeledi "*O etsa ngwana o bo o mo itatola*".

ADDENDUM 4

Name: Mrs G Mpaiwa

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Morwakwena

Occupation: Housewife

Date: 21/06/1984

Totem: Kgabo

Age: 78

Regiment: Leletamotse

Leetile Raditladi was son of Disang Raditladi and his mother was Nkwana. Nkwana was the daughter of Ratshosa. Nkwana's mother was Besi. Besi was the daughter of Khama's first wife.

With regard to the banishment, Leetile and his father Disang were expelled by Tshekedi. Leetile was accused of having connections with Bagakgametse, the daughter of Moloi. Chief Tshekedi accused Leetile at Kgotla. Tshekedi divorced Bagakgametse and married a Morolong wife whose name I have forgotten. I attended school with Bagakgametse and she was my friend. As soon as Bagakgametse was married by chief Tshekedi I started to avoid her.

Leetile did not admit committing adultery, he said in Kgotla that the child was not his, but Tshekedi's. Leetile went to the chief's home mainly to visit the chief who was his uncle. In other words Leetile was the grandson of the sister of Tshekedi, that is, Besi. The child of Bagakgametse is still alive.

Leetile stayed in Maung and Mahalapye after the banishment. [The respondent did not give further details regarding [the] adultery issue because she claimed that even Bamangwato are avoiding the issue].

The child of Bagakgametse by the name of Boingotlo is still alive, but I am not sure about the name, and presently as I am talking she is blind. Leetile, Disang and Lebang were banished by kgosi Tshekedi and the British government. My father Lebang was called from Francistown because it was said he uttered words which were hostile to Tshekedi. Leetile and Disang were banished to Mafikeng; actually Disang was ill in bed at the time of expulsion. He did not live very long in Mafikeng. Lebang himself was banished to Francistown.

Tshekedi married Bagakgametse in 1936 and in 1937 he divorced her – when Bagakgametse went to Bobonong to deliver the child, she was never admitted back. I do not think Leetile could have had any connections with the chief's wife who was recently married. In fact Leetile often visited the home of Tshekedi because of Besi (grandmother of Leetile). Besi was [the] daughter of Kgama with his senior wife and Tshekedi was Kgama's son with his junior wife, Semane. Leetile's mother was Nkwana, daughter of Ratshosa.

Leetile and Disang went to Mafikeng after being banished. From Mafikeng Leetile went to Tawana to work in the government office. At this time Mohumagadi Moremi was chief of Batawana. From Maun he came home to Serowe and built a house in Monamong ward. By this time Seretse was in Serowe. He did not stay for a long time in Serowe. He was sent to become a subordinate chief at Tonota. From Tonota he was transferred to Mahalapye to become a subordinate chief there. Leetile formed the Federal Party and was followed by Motsete who formed [the] Bechuanaland People's party. Seretse later formed [the] Bechuanaland Democratic Party. The Federal Party did not take off the ground. I am not sure [but] I think Leetile worked in Francistown in the DC's office after coming back from Maung. He died at Mahalapye in his home. Before he died he fell ill for a long time.

Leetile was intelligent and he appreciated development. Before he died in Mahalapye he arranged some of the homes in lines. That is why we have a Section called *Dilaene* (Lines) in Mahalapye. He built a house in Francistown after returning from Maun. The plans of his homes in Francistown and Mahalapye made him who he was. In Mahalapye he had a Grinding Mill – and had one in Serowe. He was the first to bring a Grinding Mill to Serowe. While in Francistown he hired part of the hotel of his uncle Simon Ratshosa in order to carry out his business.

Leetile had eight children. He married the first wife at Mafikeng and left her. He married the second wife who is in Mahalapye. Some of his children are in Gaborone.

ADDENDUM 5

Name: Radipofu Moloi Sekgoma

Place of Interview: Serowe

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 21/06/1984

Totem: Phuti

Regiment: Leletamotse

Leetile Raditladi was Council Secretary of Batawana. He helped Mohumagadi Moremi III as Kgosi of the Batawana. From the Batawana, Leetile came back to Bamangwato and he was posted to rule at Mahalapye. From Mahalapye, Leetile came back to Serowe and went to rule among Bahurutshe of Tonota. I Radipofu, personally took him to Tonota to present him to Bahurutshe who he was going to rule. Leetile fell ill while he was in Tonota and eventually died at Mahalapye after consulting many doctors.

Leetile and his father Disang were expelled from Bamangwato by chief Tshekedi. From Serowe, Leetile and Disang went to live among the Barolong. However, I cannot go into the reasons of banishment – those who know will go into that. I was at war when he came back so I don't know the conditions under which Leetile was allowed back to the Ngwato reserve. Well, Leetile was educated and attended school at Lovedale in South Africa. In Mahalapye and Tonota he was subordinate chief of the Bangwato.

Leetile was very friendly to Seretse, more so, they were related. Leetile founded the Federal Party but apparently the party did not last because he abandoned the idea as soon as he saw Seretse's party (BDP) was overpowering him. As far as I am concerned Leetile never worked in Serowe as Tribal Secretary.

ADDENDUM 6

Name: Honourable Bathoen S. Gaseitsiwe

Place of Interview: Gaborone

Ward: Kgosing (Kanye)

Occupation: Member of Parliament

Date: 29/06/1984

Totem: Kwena

Age: 75

Regiment: Leisantwa

Leetile Disang was the son of Disang Raditladi, who was the son of Sekgoma. Leetile went [to] School in Serowe Primary School and from there he went to Tiger Kloof and proceeded to Lovedale.

When Leetile came back from school he was very interested in writing books. Some of the books he produced include *Motswasele* and *Sefalana sa Menate*. Leetile was chief representative of the Bamangwato at Tonota and from there he came to Mahalapye as an ordinary man.

He was elected as representative of the Bangwato in Joint Advisory Council (JAC) and Legislative Council, which met at Mafikeng and Lobatse respectively. When considerations were ripe to form political parties, Leetile organized a party called [the] Federal Party. But before this party could take off the ground Kgalemang Motsete also formed another party called The Botswana People's Party (BPP). Then Seretse Kgama also came in with his party: The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). Mr Raditladi felt he could not carry on with a party in opposition to that of Seretse and so he relinquished the idea. It is not regrettable that he became ill and was physically indisposed [to] either continue with his policy as a leader or ordinary member in politics. His untimely death put an end to that career.

In the JAC he never quarreled with Kgosi Tsheledi – their relationship was normal and there was no feeling of enmity between the two.

Leetile was involved in a domestic dispute in which chief Tsheledi was concerned but the outcome of it was banishment from [the] Bamangwato Tribal Territory. After being banished, Leetile and his family sort asylum with the chief of Barolong in Mafikeng. After some years he was reconciled with his homeland where he began his political activities.

ADDENDUM 7

Name: D.M. Dilebanye

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Thito ya Mokudi

Occupation: Former Teacher

Date: 15/07/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 62

Regiment: Ledisa kgosi

Leetile Raditladi came to Maun after the death of chief Moremi in 1946. I am not sure about the date of his arrival because I was away at school. At the time of his arrival Mohumagadi Moremi was the regent to the Tawana throne on behalf of her son Letsholathebe.

Leetile was a Secretary in the Tribal Administration. He knew his job quite well and carried out his duties assigned to him. The main conflict came when Mohumagadi Moremi relied on the advice of Raditladi instead of the advice of the Tribe (as is normally the case). The tribe hence conflicted with Leetile because it felt that he was influential on the regent. People were suspicious because if things went wrong it would be because of Leetile – so Leetile had to resign as Secretary. The tribe hoped that after the resignation of Leetile maybe the regent can listen to the advice of the people.

We (Batawana) understand that Leetile was related to the Ngwato royalty – and that Batawana are younger than the Bangwato. In this case Mr Raditladi was senior to the Batawana – so he could not live with the Batawana (who were junior to him) because he could claim chieftainship. The feeling of the people was that

Leetile could take advantage of the situation and then claim chieftainship. The result of this would be trouble due to chieftainship dispute. Leetile went back to his Ngwato reserve under such circumstances. The Batawana did not like Leetile although Mohumagadi Moremi wanted him. On the overall we can say that Leetile left the Tawana reserve because of the force of the people.

The underlying secret is that Leetile had involved himself into the house of Mohumagadi Moremi. In such a situation it was difficult for the regent to listen to other people except for Raditladi.

When Leetile arrived in the Tawana reserve he was given residence temporarily at the Tatuwe ward and later he built a house at the Kgosing ward.

With regard to the membership of Raditladi to the African Advisory Council – I cannot dismiss the possibility since at the time I was away at school. It might be possible that Raditladi joined the A.A.C. more so he was advisor to the regent. At this time the A.A.C was in existence. It is understood that Leetile was in conflict with chief Tshekeledi in the Ngwato reserve.

ADDENDUM 8

Name: Rre Mothowagae Semagamaga

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Mhapha

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 16/07/1984

Totem: Kwena

Age: 64

Regiment: Ledisakgosi

I began to see Leetile Raditladi in 1946 in Maun. When he was here, he was Tribal Secretary. If I am not mistaken Raditladi left Maung in 1951. His outstanding contribution was the development of the Tribal Administration, for example, he developed the Tribal Administration through the establishment of offices outside Maung at places like Sehitwa, Shakawe and Somare. His idea of establishing offices was later continued by Mohumagadi Moremi.

When Leetile Raditladi became Tribal Secretary, he was called upon by chief Moremi Mathiba. Chief Moremi brought Leetile before the tribe. Chief Moremi announced that Raditladi was going to become Secretary and that he was more educated compared to Tsheko Tsheko (who was the Tribal Secretary). Mr Raditladi was going to become a senior Tribal Secretary to Tsheko Tsheko.

In his term of office I appreciated Raditladi's efforts because he brought development to the Batawana Tribal Administration. I am saying this because from 1948 to 1950, I was the Tribal Treasurer and Leetile was the Tribal Secretary.

In 1946 Chief Moremi died and Leetile worked with Mohumagadi Pulane. He went with Mohumagadi to attend the African Advisory Council (A.A.C.) at Mafikeng. In 1948 there was a conflict between Bayei and Batawana. The Bayei wanted to have their own independent wards from the Batawana. Leetile played a prominent part on behalf of the Batawana in bringing a solution to the issue of Batawana and Bayei.

Leetile was a great writer. In 1951, I was now working with the government at Lobatse and I do not know how he resigned as Tribal Secretary. But what I can say is that there was misunderstanding between him and some Batawana. It seems that some Batawana were jealous (*diphufa*).

ADDENDUM 9

Name: Mbuwe Sekikao

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Boyei

Occupation: NIL

Date: 16/07/1984

Totem: Thamaga (Letsatsi)

Age: 68

Regiment: Ledisakgosi

I began to understand Leetile Raditladi in 1948. I regarded him as *kgosi* because the issue of Bayei and the Batawana was channeled through him. Leetile accepted the complaints (*dingongorego*) of the Bayei like a chief does.

The Batawana were saying that the Bayei were rebelling “*Re a iphetlha*” against them. Leetile made investigations into the issue and suggested that the Bayei were entitled to their rights. Leetile understood that the Bayei were called Makoba by Batawana who wanted to retain them as subject people.

Leetile wrote the complaint of Bayei and submitted the same statement even up to the British Administration. Because of Raditladi the Bayei were able to elect Moeti Samotsoko as their headman. In addition to this, the Bayei were allowed to have their own wards outside Maun.

Secondly, I saw Raditladi when some Batawana were hired by the C.D.C, a contractor based at Pandamatenga. The C.D.C. did not treat us well and we sent our complaints to Mohumagadi Moremi who was the regent at the time. As a result of this, Raditladi came to Pandamatenga on behalf of the Regent to listen

to our complaints. He managed to solve the problems between the C.D.C. masters "*Barena*" and us.

I regarded Leetile as a mediator between the Batawana and the Bayei. Briefly the Bayei were complaining that the Batawana dispossessed them of their land and that they Bayei were not allowed to have their own wards.

The role of Raditladi becomes important if you consider what happened to us [Bayei] after the departure of Raditladi. Some of the Bayei were put into prison, their land was taken, their headmen removed from their wards and were not revived. I personally was imprisoned and my land confiscated.

ADDENDUM 10

Name: Keatlaretse Mosege

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Kubung

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 16/07/1984

Totem: Kubung

Age: 56

Regiment: Ledisakgosi

I think that Leetile Raditladi came to Maun in 1946 when Chief Moremi died. By that time I was at school.

After the death of Moremi, his wife Mohumagadi Moremi became regent in 1947. Leetile Raditladi was employed as Tribal Secretary. When I came to Maung in 1949 he was in office as Tribal Secretary. I understand that during the court case

of the Batawana and the Bayei in 1948 Raditladi was Secretary to Mohumagadi. Raditladi played a prominent role in the issue between the Bayei and the Batawana.

He remained as Tribal Secretary until 1953. Around 1952, there was a dispute between the Batawana and Mohumagadi. The Batawana wanted Raditladi to resign as Tribal Secretary because they thought that he was influential on the regent. They felt that now the regent disregarded the advice of the tribe preferring that of Raditladi.

In 1953 he resigned as Tribal Secretary and then went to stay in Francistown. In fact, Raditladi left Maun because he was forced to resign from his post by the Batawana who said they did not like him.

While in Francistown, Raditladi was staying with his relative Simon Ratshosa (who was also banished from Serowe by chief Tshekedi). Raditladi and Simon Ratshosa had a business in Francistown at a place called Mimosa Hall.

The last time I met Leetile was at Mahalapye in 1963 where he was the chief's representative. He finally died at Mahalapye.

Since Raditladi was a Tribal Secretary, he attended the A.C.C. at Mafeking together with Mohumagadi. Raditladi was handling the books of the tribe. I think Raditladi was a member of the group that formed Ngamiland Recreational Association in 1949. Raditladi formed a Political Party called the Federal Party at Mahalapye. Before he came to Maun he was working as a government clerk at the Imperial Reserve in Mafeking. Raditladi attended school in South Africa at Lovedale where he received his matric.

After leaving school he was employed by government (since government was the largest employer at the time). He married at Mafeking more so he had been banished from his reserve. We understand that Leetile and Ratshosa were in conflict with chief Tshekedi. And finally they were banished from Serowe.

Raditladi was a great writer, he did not only write books, but also submitted articles to the "*Naledi ya Botswana*" press agency.

ADDENDUM 11

Name: Mr Morris Mhapha

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Mhapha

Occupation: Chairman of Subordinate Land Board (Sehithwa)

Date: 17/07/1984

Totem: Kgomo (Nare)

Age: 63

Regiment: Ledisakgosi

I saw Leetile Raditladi in 1947, he was working with the Department of Tsetse-fly (T.F.C.). He was the Senior Clerk in the Department. Towards the end of 1947, I Morris Mhapha, became his junior clerk in the department. Raditladi was a great reader. Raditladi left the T.F.C. department and joined the Tribal Administration. He was the Tribal Secretary and was working with Tsheko (who was under Raditladi). I left T.F.C. with Raditladi and worked under them in the Tribal Administration as a typist clerk.

In 1948 there was a petition of the Bayei. The Bayei wanted their rights as the original residents of Maun. In other words, the Batawana found them there. The

regent at that time was Elizabeth Pulani Moremi. Leetile (as Senior Tribal Secretary) channeled the complaint of the Bayei in a competent way and good manner. Leetile suggested that the complaint of the Bayei should be heard in Kgotla under the supervision of the District Commission. This suggestion was different from the traditional way of settling disputes of that nature. It was finally resolved that the Bayei were rebellious, that is, *ba iphetlha*, however the Bayei were given independent wards in Maun and surrounding areas.

During the presence of Leetile Raditladi the other thing which happened was the petition of Batawana and the regent Moremi. This was in 1950. The Batawana complained that they saw some things being done without consulting or informing them. The Batawana felt that Raditladi was influential on the regent. For example, the regent made a law to the effect that 'cows should be checked with the hand by Veterinary Assistants for Artificial Insemination'. This was done without the consent of cattle owners. In other words it was the agreement between Raditladi and the regent.

The Batawana complained about this and the result was a misunderstanding between the regent and Raditladi on the one hand and the Batawana on the other. The concerned (discontent) Batawana were led by Masuga Moremi. Masuga Moremi was brought before the court by the regent. Masuga Moremi was finally removed from Maun and taken to Sankoye. Masuga Moremi made an appeal to the high court which found him together with his followers not guilty.

Shortly afterwards Raditladi left the positions of Secretary and left Maun. Raditladi was forced to resign by the Batawana. During his term of office Raditladi attended the Council with Mohumagadi Moremi. Raditladi came to Maun in 1947 but chief Moremi died in December 1946.

We understand that Leetile and Disang Raditladi were expelled from Ngwato reserve by Chief Tshekedi. Leetile was the first person in Bechuanaland to form a political party. His party was called Federal Party. The Federal Party was not successful because in a very short time it faded away.

ADDENDUM 12

Name: Mr Bakgaoganye P Makwati

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Borolong

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 18/07/1984

Totem: Tholo

Age: 84

Regiment: Leletamotse

I worked with Raditladi. He was a Senior Tribal Secretary during the time of Chief Moremi III. I was a tax collector. Raditladi came to Maun as a government employee. He was a government clerk and an interpreter at the DC's office – before he became Tribal Secretary. He was a dedicated worker and knew his job quite well. After the death of Chief Moremi III, his widow Pulani became regent to the Tawana Chieftainship. Raditladi was Secretary to Mohumagadi Moremi. Raditladi had good advice and suggestions more so he knew the origins and roots of Tribal Administration during the Protectorate.

He did not dominate his juniors, but rather worked with them peacefully. When Raditladi left office, personally, I had seen nothing wrong with him. He made me a testimony when I retired. Raditladi made suggestions of things which were done in preparation for the visit of the British High Commissioner. Leetile

resigned as Tribal Secretary because of a dispute with the Batawana. The Batawana were suspicious of the relationship between Leetile and Mohumagadi Moremi. They had a feeling that Raditladi wanted to claim chieftainship. For example, they claimed that Raditladi had signed an official letter which was supposed to be signed by Mohumagadi Moremi. Under such circumstances Raditladi was forced to resign as Secretary and also leave Maun. From Maun he became the Chief Representative at Tonota where he later died.

Raditladi became Tribal Secretary at the invitation of Chief Moremi. But immediately after making that invitation, chief Moremi died. Since Raditladi had already agreed to become Tribal Secretary he left government post and joined the Administration of Mohumagadi Moremi. Since Leetile Raditladi was Tribal Secretary he represented the Batawana together with Mohumagadi Moremi in the A.A.C. or any other activity.

ADDENDUM 13

Name: Mr K.M. Ramooketsi

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Lecaca

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 19/07/1984

Totem: Mopharing

Age:83

Regiment: Matola

Leetile Raditladi came to Maun as Secretary to the Regent Pulane who ruled after the death of her husband Chief Moremi. Leetile came after the death of Moremi. The Batawana regarded Leetile as Secretary. We knew that at Serowe

Raditladi was related to the Ngwato royalty. We did not regard him as a chief. We took him as our child, not a chief.

Although Raditladi was a good Secretary, nevertheless he underestimated the Batawana and hence claimed Chieftainship. He regarded himself as chief. When Mohumagadi Pulane was ruling with Moshuga, people were complaining that they were not ruling well. But later Mohumagadi dismissed Moshuga, and took Raditladi as her advisor. Mohumagadi and Raditladi were undermining the Batawana. Within a short time there was a small query which evolved into a big dispute. The dispute was between Mohumagadi and Raditladi on the one hand and the Batawana on the other.

Moshuga who was the advisor of the chief now left his duties and joined the Batawana who were concerned about the leadership of Mohumagadi. The Batawana felt that Raditladi was exceeding his powers as Tribal Secretary. He gave himself the right to lash people or administer corporal punishment. This was against tradition according to which the chief was responsible for such punishment. Because of the misunderstanding between Raditladi and Batawana, Raditladi was forced to resign as Tribal Secretary and leave Maun. The Batawana nearly killed him because they disliked him.

ADDENDUM 14

Name: Mr Montsho Mogalakwe

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Mabudutsa

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 20/07/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 76

Leetile Raditladi was hired in Maun (Tawana) as Tribal Secretary. He was the Senior Secretary of Chief Moremi, the father of Letsholathebe. At the time when he was working at Tawana, there were no offices such as Tribal Officers. In addition, there was no treasurer. However, the Native Funds were in existence. This money was used to pay the chief and people who were working under him.

The Native funds were under control of the tribe but not the Colonial government. Raditladi changed the traditional way of settling disputes in traditional courts. In the traditional system a person could ask questions which he wanted. Furthermore, during the court proceedings, people gave their opinions regarding judgment, that is, as to how they saw the case. Raditladi made the following changes:

- If we have the plaintiff and the defendant (accused), first of all the plaintiff will give his statement [and] from there, answer the questions asked by the defendant. The defendant asks questions relating to what the plaintiff has said (in his statement).
- After that the assessor of the case would then be required to ask the plaintiff questions. When the assessor has finished asking questions the defendant then makes his statement and then answers questions from both the plaintiff and the assessor.
- After this, the assessor is then required to give his own judgment of the case. From there, the chief who presides over the case gives his judgment
- If the chief's judgment coincides with that of the assessor, then the assessor's judgment is taken into consideration. But if the chief's judgment

differs from that of the assessor, the final judgment will in that case come from the chief who is the chief judge. However, the chief will give reasons as to why he does not agree with the assessor.

- The chief, after passing judgment, will ask both the plaintiff and the defendant to make appeal within 30 days if not satisfied with the judgment. Otherwise after 30 days the appeal is not accepted. The new system of trying cases was introduced by Leetile Raditladi.

As I have said earlier, there were no tribal offices and that the Native Fund was put in the hole in a hut. Raditladi suggested that there should be offices which will house the Chief, Junior Secretaries and the Senior Secretary. He built a house from which he was later chased.

There was a petition concerning Raditladi. People no longer wanted him. This was at the time of regent Mohumagadi Moremi. Mohumagadi was the regent to Letsholathebe. The petition said that Raditladi should be expelled or killed. The people were jealous that Raditladi was also the advisor of the regent. Raditladi was then forced out of his house by the petitioners. At this point the people of Mabudutsa ward came together (this was during court proceedings) and wrote a letter. The letter said: 'We people of Mabudutsa ward do not see anything wrong with Raditladi'. The letter said that anyone who sees anything wrong with Raditladi should stand up in Kgotla and say out his opinion. Only a few people stood up – many failed to stand up and show where Raditladi had gone wrong. The people of Mabudutsa then suggested to Raditladi to go back home since he was now hated by Batawana. The people made this suggestion to Raditladi firstly because of sympathy – that is the people of Mabudutsa are related to Raditladi at Serowe. Secondly, the Mabudutsa made this suggestion because their advice is considered important since they are related to Tawana chieftainship. Tawana,

who came with the Batawana after separating from Ngwato, was the father of Mogalakwe

After being advised by people of Mabudutsa ward, Raditladi then went back home where he died. The main secret behind the misunderstanding between Raditladi and the Batawana is that people were suspicious since Raditladi was working with Mohumagadi. They felt that Raditladi might have involved himself in the house of Moremi and then be in the position to claim chieftainship. Raditladi, as the Senior Tribal Secretary, attended A.A.C. together with Mohumagadi Moremi. He liked sports and also built a hall which was used for entertainment.

ADDENDUM 15

Name: Mr Modisang G Modisang

Place of Interview: Maun

Ward: Thito ya Mokoli

Occupation: Nominated Councillor (Maun)

Date: 20/07/1984

Totem: Kwena

Age: 59

Regiment: Letima

Leetile Raditladi was the Tribal Secretary of chief Moremi III. The chief died in a short time and he then became the Senior Tribal Secretary and also helped Mohumagadi Elizabeth Pulane Moremi who was the regent. At that time I was assistant Teacher in Maun.

In a short time there was a misunderstanding between Raditladi on the one hand and the Batawana. The misunderstanding was caused by Raditladi especially in

the way he advised the regent. The Batawana were saying that Mashuga Moremi should be the advisor of the chief in all matters. In other words, the Batawana regarded Raditladi as the Secretary not the advisor of the chief. Raditladi was against this idea. For example, Raditladi advised the regent to allow European traders to buy skins from people. This was done without the consent of the cattle owners and hence was unacceptable to the tribe. The tribe felt that boys could slaughter cattle and sell skins without the consent of their owners.

When Raditladi began to realize that the Batawana were against him, he promised the Makoba (later known as Bayei) that if they helped him oust Mashuga and put Mashuga in prison he was going to give them (Bayei) the land called Diyei. At this time Mr Motsamai Mpho was at Johannesburg, he was working in the mines.

The Batawana became furious when the District Commissioner DC punished Mashuga saying that he should go and stay at the remote area called Sankoyo. The Batawana refused and made an appeal to the High Court at Lobatse. At the High Court Mashuga [he] was not found guilty and hence there was no reason why he should go to Sankoyo.

The idea of giving the Bayei land ended in the air – without Bayei getting their land. When Bayei complained that Raditladi did not fulfill his promise he told them that Mohumagadi Moremi did not commit herself in promising to give Bayei land.

At this point Batawana realized that Leetile Raditladi was not a good person and then forced him to resign as tribal secretary. At the time of his dismissal the political atmosphere in Bechuanaland was in a bad state. The policy of British protectorate especially towards her African colonies was put to test even by

chiefs like Tshekedi. In Bechuanaland this form of politics was initiated by Tshekedi during his issue with Seretse Kgama. Seretse at that time was away.

Raditladi decided to form a political party called [the] Bechuanaland Protectorate Federal Party. Because Raditladi knew that people in Maung were very energetic he wanted their support. Actually, Mr Raditladi wanted the Federal Party to encompass all the eight big Tribes in the Native Reserves – he wanted a Federation. The Federal Party was not acceptable to Batawana because they knew Leetile's conduct or behaviour and they had previously expelled him from the Tawana Reserve. Raditladi was easily discouraged. If his ideas or advice were discredited by others for some reasons, for example, after comments in "*Naledi ya Botswana*" regarding criticism of Federal Party, Raditladi abandoned the idea and Federal Party failed to take off the ground.

Raditladi made one important change in Maun and this concerns the court system. Raditladi's court cases were written and conducted in an English style. In other words, the person who accuses (plaintiff) gives his statement and after that the plaintiff is asked questions on the basis of what he said in court. The accused (defendant) also puts his statement and the plaintiff also puts his questions on the basis of what he said. This system was a new change.

ADDENDUM 16

Name: Tonota

Place of Interview: Mr Andrew Sedabadi

Ward: Bokhurutshe

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 23/07/1984

Totem: Phofu

Age: 65

Regiment: Malekantwa

Leetile Raditladi became a Senior African Authority in Tonota in 1968 and this was after the death of Manyaphiri. Mr Raditladi was the chief's representative of the Ngwato Administration which was under Mr Kgamane.

When he came to Tonota in 1968 he was transferred from Mahalapye where he was still the African Authority. Leetile knew his administrative work. And apart from that he was educated and did not even need the service of an interpreter. He was educated at Lovedale. He was different from other African Authorities sent to Tonota.(e.g. Mr Ookame and Mr Manyaphiri) who were not educated and required the services of an interpreter. Unlike his predecessors and other chiefs, Raditladi wrote for himself.

Although Raditladi was a good administrator, the main problem was that, African Authorities (Chief's representatives) used their power not as employees but as chiefs since they were also related to the Ngwato royalty. The African Authority dealt with appeal cases, that is, before such cases could be sent to Serowe they went through the African Authority. The local chiefs in Tonota were retained and dealt with cases in a normal way. But appeals were dealt with by Africa Authority.

Raditladi was a great politician and whatever he did was done according to some principles. As a politician he was the founder of the Federal Party. I think that this was the first political party to be formed. The second party was formed after Raditladi's one was the Botswana People's Party (B.P.P.) and the third was the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) which was later followed by the Botswana National Front (B.N.F.). Mr Raditladi could have been the first successful politician but the main problem with that, it seems membership of his party was weak. He was a great writer and some of his books can be found in libraries. He

was also a poet. Actually Raditladi and Molwa were the only educated members of the Ngwato royal line at the time although Tshekedi was more educated compared to them.

In Maun Raditladi played a prominent part in the Tswana Tribal Administration. Leetile Raditladi finally died at Mahalapye in 1972. He died after a long illness. Before his death he went to many places including Bulawayo seeking medical treatment. Leetile was suffering from swollen [a] throat (*dikodu*). While in Bulawayo he received an operation but did not recover. He died at Mahalapye where he was allowed to rest and recover. At the time of his death he was still the chief's representative at Tonota. I think he was buried at Serowe.

It seems Raditladi was expelled from Serowe at the time of Tshekedi because Tshekedi alleged that Raditladi had a child with Tshekedi's first wife. Tshekedi divorced the wife and also expelled Raditladi. All this happened when both Raditladi and Tshekedi were still in their youth.

ADDENDUM 17

Name: Mrs E.P. Moremi

Place of Interview: Francistown

Ward: Central Francistown

Occupation: Former Regent of Batawana

Date: 26/07/1984

Totem: Tshipi

Age: 72

Leetile Raditladi was expelled from the Ngwato reserve. He was expelled because of his conflict with Tshekedi. Tshekedi alleged that his newly married

wife Bagakgametse had had a child with Raditladi. Tsheledi further alleged that Bagakgametse no longer loved him because she attempted to poison him. Bagakgametse who had learned cooking at Lovedale denied the allegations of having administered poison to the chief. Bagakgametse also denied having any love relationship with Raditladi. In fact Bagakgametse became the chief's designate wife while at school. When Tsheledi wanted to marry some woman, his mother said he could not marry any other wife but Bagakgametse. So that in alleging that Bagakgametse had had a child with Raditladi, Tsheledi was trying to make a ground for divorce. Tsheledi finally managed to divorce Bagakgametse. He was banished together with his parents. Tsheledi also expelled the Ratshosa claiming that they wanted chieftainship. The Ratshosa were expelled before Raditladi and their huts were burned.

Raditladi was the grandson of Besi and Besi was the first daughter of Kgama. But because Besi was a woman, the chieftainship was taken by Sekgoma, the father of Seretse Kgama. Besi was married to Ratshosa, and their daughter was Nkwane who in turn was the mother of Raditladi. Raditladi was rich and left Serowe due to his misunderstanding with Tsheledi. After being expelled, Raditladi found employment with government and came to Maun as a government employee.

Leetile Raditladi was educated and attended school at Fort Hare. The Colonial government employed him because of his education. He was a great friend of Chief Moremi III. Chief Moremi asked the Colonial government to allow Raditladi to help him. Chief Moremi introduced the coming of Raditladi but died because of [a] car accident before Raditladi arrived at Maun. After the death of Moremi, I became the regent of Batawana. When I got into office I finalized the necessary arrangements of transferring Leetile from the T.F.C. (Tsetse Fly Control) Department offices in Maun to the Tawana Tribal Administration. Before coming to

Maun, Leetile had worked with DC's office at Ghanzi. During the Colonial government it was not easy for an African to work in the DC's office.

The reason why I asked the government to allow Raditladi to become the Tribal Secretary is that the Tawana Tribal Administration was in chaos, for example, there was no book-keeping.

We (Mohumagadi and Leetile) brought changes to the way changes were tried in the traditional court. In fact the introduction of the new system was initiated by Raditladi. Beforehand people stood up and said whatever they wanted without any formalized order. But Raditladi made the new system in such a way that a person presented his statement and then answered questions related to his statement. The court proceedings were heard by Raditladi as the Secretary and three Counselors. Before the regent could pass judgement, Raditladi together with the Counselors summarized the case. In addition, Raditladi took the minutes of the court proceedings. After the regent has passed judgement people who were not satisfied were allowed to give reasons of appeal and then the Secretary would, on behalf of the regent, give reasons of judgement.

Since Raditladi was the Tribal Secretary, he supervised the buildings of schools such as Moremi School. He made lists of things which were required for the construction, that is, building material. In addition, Raditladi attended the A.A.C. as my Secretary – he was the one who held tribal books.

During the time of Raditladi as Tribal Secretary, Mr Tsheko Tsheko was the treasurer and later after Raditladi had left, Tsheko Tsheko became the Tribal Secretary. Raditladi made enormous contributions to the Tawana Tribal Administration. Actually, he shaped the Batawana to become what they are.

The Batawana claimed that Raditladi wanted to make himself chief. They further claimed that Raditladi was selling land and that he was the one who sold the Crownland and fenced it. The Batawana claimed that Raditladi was a bad influence to Mohumagadi. Some people claimed that he was exceeding his powers as Secretary especially when he made summary of the case before I carried judgement.

The petition alleged that Raditladi was selling land. The Batawana said that Raditladi should be forced to resign. However, the petitioners were very few in number and most of the Batawana were not opposed to Raditladi. Finally Raditladi left because he realized that people no longer wanted him. While Raditladi was still Tribal Secretary in Maun, his banishment was still not over but he made appeals for [his] banishment to be lifted. From Maun he resided in Francistown. He operated the Mimosa Café which he hired from his uncles, the Ratshosa, who were also living in Francistown after being expelled by Tshekedi.

ADDENDUM 18

Name: Does not want to disclose

Place of Interview: Francistown

Ward: Confidential

Occupation: Confidential

Date: 26/07/1984

Leetile's father was Disang Raditladi and his mother was Nkwane Ratshosa. I think he was born in 1910 in Serowe. Their home was situated at Monamo Ward at Serowe. Leetile was educated at Tiger Kloof and Lovedale where he matriculated. Raditladi, like the Ratshosa, was expelled from Serowe by the regent Tshekedi.

The Ratshosa were accused of claiming chieftainship and having attempted to shoot Tshekeledi with a rifle. The Ratshosa could not claim chieftainship although they knew the secret of the chief as senior members of the royal line.

Leetile Raditladi was falsely accused by Tshekeledi. Tshekeledi accused Raditladi for having a child with Tshekeledi's first wife by the name of Bagakgametse Moloi. Leetile denied the allegation that the child was his. Tshekeledi falsely accused Leetile because he wanted to have a ground for divorcing Bagakgametse. Tshekeledi wanted Leetile to admit paternity of the child so as to have grounds for divorce.

Leetile could not have involved himself into the house Tshekeledi since Tshekeledi had just recently married Bagakgametse, and the chief's wife was feared by people. Leetile did not have any love connections with Bagakgametse. Tshekeledi accused Leetile in a Kgotla. The case was even attended by attorneys. Leetile was called upon to Kgotla where he was told that he had some connections with Bagakgametse.

Tshekeledi divorced Bagakgametse and married a Morolong wife and Leetile was expelled from Serowe. The expulsion of Leetile Raditladi cannot be linked with the question of chieftainship. Tshekeledi was the regent and there was no one who could claim chieftainship from him. Even the Ratshosa brothers did not claim chieftainship from him. Tshekeledi was cruel, he did not want people who were intelligent and rich next to him. Tshekeledi confiscated people's property. For example, Leetile Raditladi was very intelligent and was expelled. The Ratshosa had built modern homes and they were expelled and their houses burned to ash.

Disang the father of Leetile was not expelled as such. Disang went away because he felt his son (Leetile) had not been treated well by Tshekeledi. After

being expelled, Leetile together with his father Disang came to live with their relatives (Ratshosa) in Francistown. During the Kgotla proceedings Leetile went to Mafeking where he hired his attorneys. From Francistown he went to Mafeking and from there to Tsabong. From Tsabong Leetile went to Maun.

After the death of Chief Moremi III, Leetile was called upon by the Batawana to come and help Mohumagadi Moremi who was now the regent. Leetile was called by Naledi, the chief's uncle and Senior Advisor. Later the Batawana said Leetile was influential on Mohumagadi Moremi and they no longer wanted him. Furthermore, the Batawana felt that Leetile could ultimately claim the chieftainship since he was the member of the Bangwato ruling clan and that the Bangwato are senior to the Batawana. Leetile left Maun and settled in Francistown where he hired his uncle's café called Mimosa for business purposes.

From Francistown, Leetile was called upon by the Bangwato to become Subordinate chief at Mahalapye. Beforehand the Ngwato chieftainship had wanted Leetile to rule at Sebina. Leetile did not go to Sebina because he said that his health was now failing and said that Sebina was far from medical facilities. Leetile's request was pardoned and he was allowed to rule in Mahalapye. From there he was transferred to Tonota. Leetile finally died at Mahalapye where he was buried.

Leetile Married his first wife in Mafikeng, the name of his wife was Ofentse Seane. But apparently Ofentse did not want to live the Barolong area. Leetile had four children with Ofentse. The names of the children are as follows: Disang, Madibana, Besi and Marang. Later Leetile married Kanana Masupe of Maunatlala. He also got four children with Kanana. The names of the children are as follows: Lebang, Goakofile, Nkwane and Keletlhokile.

Leetile Raditladi was the first politician. He formed Federal Party but abandoned the idea when Seretse Kgama formed his party. Leetile later joined Seretse's party. Leetile attended the A.A.C. because he was Secretary of Batawana. Lastly Leetile was a great writer. He published many books. In one of his books '*Sefalana sa Menate*' he writes about his personal experience especially the poem *Motlhokagae*.

ADDENDUM 19

Name: Mrs K.B. Ratshosa

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Ratshosa

Occupation: Teacher

Date: 03/08/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 64

Regiment: Lelekantwa

Leetile was son of Disang, who was son of Raditladi. Raditladi was son of Kgama II. The mother of Leetile was daughter of Ratshosa, her name was Nkwane. Leetile was not only educated but he was also very intelligent. When he was still at school, he was a famous high jumper and was nicknamed Tshepe. Tshepe is a wild animal which jumps very high.

Leetile came into conflict with chief Tshekedi and ultimately Leetile left Serowe. Leetile conflicted with Tshekedi over Tshekedi's first wife Bagakgametse Moloi. Bagakgametse became the chief's designate wife while Tshekedi was still at school. Kgama had said Tshekedi should marry Bagakgametse although Bagakgametse was slightly older than Tshekedi.

Leetile fell in love with Bagakgametse and Tsheledi discovered correspondence letters of Leetile to Bagakgametse. Within a short time, Bagakgametse was expectant and before she could even deliver, some observers said that Leetile was responsible. Tsheledi denied the paternity of the child and took Leetile for trial at the Kgotla. After a long debate, Leetile left Serowe. I am not sure as to whether Leetile was expelled or left because he felt that he had been grossly treated since he denied having any connections with Bagakgametse.

Bagakgametse fled to Molepolole to live with chief Kgari. I think it is traditional for the chief's wife to flee to another chief after being dismissed. Bagakgametse's child is called Pelo and is now living in Serowe and is blind.

After living in Serowe, Leetile married at Mafikeng. From Mafikeng he worked for sometime in Maun. He worked as a clerk and was also helping Mohumagadi Moremi. Mohumagadi Moremi was the regent of the Batawana after the death of chief Moremi.

Leetile was expelled by Batawana who felt that Leetile had established some private relationship with Mohumagadi Moremi. The chief's uncle did not appreciate this because they feared that Mohumagadi Moremi could surrender everything to Leetile. The chief's uncle feared that Mohumagadi Moremi could give Leetile chieftainship instead of heir, Letsholathebe.

From Maun Leetile worked in Francistown as a clerk. Leetile came back to Serowe and he was chosen as the chief's representative at Mahalapye. Chief Tsheledi called back Leetile from Francistown and Tsheledi was the one who chose him as chief's representative at Mahalapye.

Leetile formed his party at Mahalapye, where he was nicknamed *Nthopheng* meaning elect me. He was a great writer because even his wife presently receives money obtained after selling Leetile's work.

Leetile Raditladi finally died at Mahalapye where he had built a restaurant. He died after having fallen ill for a longer period. At the time of his death Leetile's religious inclination was Sabbath.

ADDENDUM 20

Name: Mr Dingalo

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Ratshosa

Occupation: NIL

Date: 11/08/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 89

Regiment: Lesokola

Leetile's father was Disang Raditladi. Disang's father was Raditladi, son of Sekgoma. Nkwane was mother of Leetile. Nkwane was the daughter of Ratshosa who had married Besi Kgama. Leetile was the son of the nephew of Tshekedi. Leetile was educated and he did well at school. He attended school at Tiger Kloof. Apart from formal education, Leetile also did self-education.

He left Serowe as a result of his conflict with chief Tshekedi. After a long time, Tshekedi accepted Leetile Raditladi back home. The issue of Tshekedi and Raditladi had long ended. Tshekedi is the one who elected Leetile to become Subordinate chief at Mahalapye. He died in Mahalapye where he had ruled for

sometime and also built his home. Leetile left behind his wife and some children who are still living in Mahalapye. He died after long illness and even doctors failed to heal him. He complained of pain.

L.D. Raditladi was very intelligent. His intelligence was a gift from God. Leetile tried all possible ways or means of subsistence. He called upon other people to come up with plans or public works such as schools. From here he said that the plans should be submitted to the chief for assessment and approval. If the chief found the idea to be good, then the chief agreed with Leetile to implement the plan. If the plan was not accepted, the chief also gave reasons for disapproval.

ADDENDUM 21

Name: Rev Shaw Mokgadi

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Palamakue

Occupation: Reverend

Date: 13/08/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 58

Regiment: Lehetsakgang

Leetile Raditladi was born in Serowe, he belonged to the Lekgasa Regiment (1905-1910/11). He was educated at Tiger Kloof where he matriculated. He was very intelligent and possessed the gift of writing books. Leetile left Serowe as a result of his conflict with chief Tshekedi. He worked at Maun. During the issue of Tshekedi and Serets, Leetile was a supporter of Seretse. He was against the Colonial government which denied Seretse to have the right to the Ngwato throne. Both Seretse and Tshekedi were not allowed to become chiefs. As a

result of this situation where Seretse was denied chieftainship, Leetile formed a party known as Bechuanaland Federal Party and this was in 1959. The Bechuanaland Federal Party was the first party to be formed in the Bechuanaland Protectorate. The Federal Party was also formed after the establishment of Legislative Council. Tshekedi after being denied chieftainship together with Seretse urged the Colonial government to establish the Legislative Council. Actually Tshekedi and Seretse were not allowed to rule but could join politics. Tshekedi planned for the formation of Legislative Council when he was still at Rametsana because he was concerned about the future of the Protectorate.

Rasebolai was the African Tribal Authority during the absence of Tshekedi and Seretse from the Ngwato reserve. Rasebolai was chosen at the request of Tshekedi. Rasebolai elected Leetile Disang Raditladi as Senior African Authority at Mahalapye in 1960. Rasebolai did this mainly to discourage Leetile from an idea of forming a political party. The Senior Subordinate Authority was a demanding post which could not allow Leetile to indulge in politics. At this time political parties were not acceptable.

In 1962 the Federal Party collapsed. The Federal Party had some members although the members were not many. Some of the members of the Federal Party joined the Democratic Party under the leadership of Seretse. Mr Gaobotswe Motswagae, was the first vice-president of the Federal Party. Mr G Motswagae died recently and was BDP councilor. The Federal Party also collapsed because the Democratic Party was in existence. Leetile Raditladi did not want to form a party which was rival to that of Seretse. He had supported Seretse during his issue with Tshekedi, so he could not run a political party rival to that of Seretse.

In 1968 Leetile was transferred to Tonota from Mahalapye and he was still the Subordinate Authority. Leetile was the member of the first Tribal Council. He was also the member of Legislative Council. Tshekedi suggested the Legislative Council at Mafikeng during the African Advisory Council (A.A.C.). The A.A.C was attended by chiefs. The Joint Advisory Council (J.A.L.) was attended by the chiefs and the British Officials.

The first Legislative Council met at Lobatse and Tshekedi was supposed to give a draft of what he wanted the Legislative Council to be like. Unfortunately Tshekedi was already dead, he died in 1959.

Leetile Raditladi together with Seretse, G.S. Mosenyi and Tswabebe attended the first Legislative Council as representative of Bamangwato. The members of the Legislative Council were elected by the Resident Commissioner (RC), District Commissioner (DC) and sometimes by the chief. The Election into Legislative Council was similar to present situation where the president elects some of the Cabinet.

Since Raditladi was intelligent, presumably he was elected because of that, because even the Colonial government knew him as intelligent and [a] clever person. Leetile was a great scholar, he published many books which are widely read. He wrote books even when he was in bed with sickness. Leetile submitted many articles to '*Naledi ya Botswana*' the only press agency at the time. Leetile's writing ability is comparable to that of Moabi Kitchen. Leetile wrote books in proper Setswana and also knew Setswana proverbs (*diane tsa Setswana*). I think that Leetile died in 1969. He had problems with the swollen throat (*Dikodu*). Leetile was a good advisor and was a traditionalist, in other words, he disliked people who abandoned all their traditional practices.

When Raditladi returned back home, Rasebolai was the Tribal Authority but Tshekedi was in Serowe, although not a chief. This was after the issue between Seretse and Tshekedi. Although Tshekedi had earlier conflicted with Leetile, when Leetile arrived, he accepted him. In other words Tshekedi did not show any disapproval. In fact Tshekedi was a good person who easily forgave his enemies. For example, although Tshekedi had burned down the houses of the Ratshosa, he later lived with their children in Serowe. When Seretse arrived from exile in 1956, Leetile was already in Serowe.

ADDENDUM 22

Name: Gabonewe Omphile Motsokono

Place of Interview: Serowe

Ward: Kgopa

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 23/08/1984

Totem: Phuti

Age: 66

Regiment: Lekgasa

Leetile Raditladi was born in Serowe and belonged to Lekgasa Regiment. Sometimes Leetile was the leader of Lekgasa Regiment. He was son of Disang. Disang himself was the son of Raditladi Sekgoma. Leetile was very educated and after completing school he was not employed, in other words he stayed without a job.

Leetile together with his parents were expelled by Tshekedi. Tshekedi had conflicted with Leetile over Tshekedi's wife by the name of Bagakgametse. Leetile had alleged that Leetile had had a child with Bagakgametse. The case

was tried in the Kgotla. Both Leetile and Tshekedi had legal representatives. Leetile's attorney was Frankel and Tshekedi's attorney was Buccan. During the court proceedings in the Kgotla, Tshekedi held up the child and asked as to whether the child was similar to him.

After being expelled from Serowe, Leetile went to Francistown. From Francistown Leetile went to Maun. While in Maun, Leetile was employed by the Batawana as the Secretary of Mohumagadi Moremi. He was later expelled by the Batawana who felt that Leetile was claiming the Batawana chieftainship. When Leetile came back from Maun, Tshekedi was still present in Serowe. Tshekedi accepted Leetile. But Tshekedi was no longer the chief because of the Rametsana issue. The Rametsana issue arose as a result of the misunderstanding between Seretse and Tshekedi over Seretse's English woman by the name of Ruth. Rasebolai was the Tribal Authority at this time. When the Advisory Council to the chief was formed in Serowe, Leetile became its Secretary.

In a short time Rasebolai sent Leetile to Tonota where Leetile became Chief's Representative. As Chief's Representative, Leetile dealt with cases in the normal way and appeals were sent to Serowe. I and Radiphofu presented Leetile in Tonota as Chief's Representative. At first Bakhurutshe of Tonota were hesitant or reluctant to receive him. Leetile was later transferred to Mahalapye. In Mahalapye he established streets in lines and he finally died in Mahalapye. Leetile was the first politician to make a political party. Immediately after the establishment of the Legislative Council, Leetile said it was important for the people from their political parties. The Bangwato did not like the idea of political parties. Leetile's party was not successful and soon Matante formed his and was later followed by Seretse.

Apart from being a politician, Leetile was also a great writer. He produced many books and in some of them he writes about himself or personal experience.

ADDENDUM 23

Name: Mr Ditshego Ramusu

Place of Interview: Palapye

Occupation: Farmer

Date: 15/08/1984

Totem: Tau

Age: 84

Regiment: Maletamotse

Leetile Disang Raditladi conflicted with Tshekeledi over Tshekeledi's first wife. Tshekeledi conflicted with his wife when she was expectant. Tshekeledi's first wife was dismissed together with her child. Leetile was also expelled because he had involved himself with the chief's wife. During those days, *Kgosi e ne e le Modimo* meaning chiefs were like God. People who muddled with chiefs' internal affairs faced serious charges.

Seretse later brought back the child, because he regarded him as the son of his uncle (namely, Tshekeledi). Leetile came back at the time of Rasebolai. This was after the issue of Tshekeledi and Seretse. Tshekeledi objected to the marriage of Seretse to a white woman. Tshekeledi did not like this and decided to live for Rametsana with some of his followers. Leetile later ruled Mahalapye at the invitation of Seretse.

[Although the respondent is my grandfather, he was not prepared to get into the details of Leetile – Tshekeledi affair. His feeling was that as an outsider it was not right for him to talk about the affairs of the Bangwato. The respondent is a Mongwato.]

ADDENDUM 24

Name: Mr Matumo

Place of Interview:Gaborone

Occupation: N/A

Date: 17/12/1984

Totem: N/A

Age: Confidential

Regiment: Confidential

I began to see Raditladi in Francistown at Mimosa Hall. He was running a restaurant in the hall. Leetile was fond of association with other people (sitting together as a group). He spoke in light vain or jokingly but in serious manner.

Leetile has written many books and I have learned much from such books. He liked Batswana as a people, their culture and tradition. He liked and respected chieftainship although he could criticize it.

Most of Leetile's books and plays have to do with one tribe or the other, e.g. Motswasele I. The theme of Motswasele I is historically correct. In fact Raditladi was using A.J. *Wookely, Dico tsa Secwana*, L.M.S Vryburg, 1929 p45-49. That Leetile loved Secwana tradition and culture is shown by his treatment of Bakwena in Motswasele I, where he got his material from written evidence (p45-46) and as well as oral tradition. However, he does not spare criticizing the Bakwena and other tribes like the Bangwato which he focuses his writings on.

Dintshontsho tsa lorato: This is a political piece of work which goes against clan division. The author says love regardless of whether one is a chief, commoner or

foreigner (*Mfaladi*) [*Motho a rata o a bo a ratile*]. Leetile does not like discrimination of any sort.

Poetry: Sefalana sa Menate

Leetile is angry with poets and his anger comes out clearly in his poem '*Baboki ba dikgosi*'. He is angry with poets who praise chiefs and label them as whales (*maruarua*). He said it was mockery to call chiefs whales because these animals are too dangerous.

When it comes to Shaka, Leetile (LD) does not spare him. Today Shaka is taken as a great statesman and strategist, but LD sees Shaka in a different light. He sees Shaka as cruel.

In his last book *Mokomadihlhare*, he is trying to say that the coming of the white people has changed the lives of the Batswana in a rather unfortunate way. This is shown by his treatment of three characters:

1. Sipho – born in an urban area and is a rogue because of his background.
2. Mareko – born in a rural area. Although tempted like any other human being, Mareko is the type of person one may want to live with.
3. Lukase: He is born in a rural area, grew up there, and later went to an urban area to get a job. As a result of his background, he is half bad (influence of urban area) and half good (influence of the rural environment).

In other words L.D. Raditladi is saying Batswana are good if brought up in rural areas. L.D.'s writings are based on the Kgotla System (chieftainship), retaining traditional Tswana way of life. He was however against using traditional institutions for suppression of lesser clans or tribes. This is shown by his attempt

to form a Federal Party. He wanted the various ethnic groups to work together and, at the same time, try to retain some traditional identity. Raditladi might have had this attitude because his parents suffered from the wrong use of the traditional institution, that is, chieftainship, e.g. the expulsion of the Raditladi family by Tshekededi Kgama.

Raditladi was a great thinker and great advocate of social justice. This is reflected by his writings. He tried to write a book entitled '*Black Dilemma*' this shows that he was politically conscious.

L.D. Raditladi was older than me and we were friends. He was progressive, for example, his treatment of '*Mokomaditlhare*'. This was a break-away from writing on certain tribes. In writing '*Mokomaditlhare*', Raditladi was trying to write for school consumption [school use]. By the time he wrote it, he was weak on his sick-bed and the book was revised by his wife. There are some mistakes in '*Mokomaditlhare*' especially on Moitedi. The same thing applies to '*Legae Botshabelo*' in which he talks about heaven frequently. This is as a result of disturbed mind – since he was writing while he was a sick person.

Despite the brutal treatment he received from Tshekededi, Leetile continued to love chieftainship.

I was away in Zimbabwe and Lesotho at the time of the formation of the Federal Party hence I do not know anything about it.

ADDENDUM 25

Name: Mr M.P.K. Nwako

Place of Interview: Gaborone

Ward: N/A

Occupation: Minister of Commerce and Industry

Date: 25/01/1985

Totem:

Age: Confidential

I know Leetile from the early 1950's up until his death. He was a Mongwato from the lineage of Sekgoma. He was a brilliant person and was forward-looking. Leetile was politically informed and wanted the advancement of national development. When political parties were formed in Bechuanaland, he was the first person to form Federal Party. Leetile personally invited me to join because I had shown interest in his party. I did not become an active member of the Federal Party. The Federal Party was not widely canvassed and as a result died away. The Federal Party also failed because of the emergence of other political parties. Leetile was a writer, he has produced books, some of which are used in schools. He also submitted informative articles to the press such as '*Naledi ya Botswana*'.

Leetile was a Subordinate Tribal Authority at Mahalapye and later at Tonota where he became seriously ill. He finally died and was buried at Mahalapye.

[NB: The respondent was unwilling to talk in detail about the Federal Party although Mr Kgasa says the respondent, together with Ben Thema, Mr Raditladi and Mr Kgasa were in the Committee of the party.]

ADDENDUM 26

Name: Mrs Kanana Leetile Raditladi

Place of Interview: Mahalapye

Ward: N/A

Occupation: Wife of Leetile Raditladi

Date: 09/02/1985

Age: 59

I am the second wife of Leetile Raditladi. He married me in 1955 at Francistown. Leetile who was also known as Letsweletse was born in 1910 at Serowe. He started school at Serowe and after completing primary education his father Disang sent him to Lovedale. Leetile finished his secondary education at Lovedale and went to do a degree programme at Fort Hare. After finishing first year in his B.A. programme, his father sent him home with the intention of transferring him overseas, preferably England, to do his studies there. During the vacation, there was conflict (*modumo*) between Leetile and Tshekedi. The conflict is better known to Leetile and Tshekedi. At the time of the conflict, I was small and was given no explanation of the conflict. Tshekedi after long struggle decided to exile Leetile from Bamangwato. Thus the conflict denied Leetile the chance of continuing his studies and did not either give him the chance to work. Tshekedi sold Leetile's property, e.g. cattle. The property was sold at sale price. Leetile was banished to Mafeking and went with his parents including his sisters. He stayed in Mafeking for sometime and married Ofentse Seane of Mafeking. Leetile bore four children with Ofentse. And these are: Disang, Andrew, Besi and Marang.

While at Mafeking, Leetile was a teacher and was paid €5.00 per month. He had to look after himself and his family with €5.00. From Mafikeng Leetile went to work at Tsabong. From Tsabong he went to work in Maun in the Batawana Tribal

Administration. Leetile was a clerk in the *Kgotla*. From Maun Leetile went to work in Francistown. He worked in WNLA. In 1955, he married me and divorced his first wife who had remained at Mafikeng. Before divorcing Ofentse, Leetile was frequently visiting his family in Mafikeng. While in Francistown, Leetile was using Mimos Hall with his uncles. In 1957 Leetile went back to Serowe, he was called by Seretse. Seretse called back Leetile although he was not a chief. As a royal member Seretse had the power to call back Leetile. In addition, Leetile was also related to Tshekedi. At the time when Leetile went to Serowe in 1957, Tshekedi was at Rametsana.

In December 1959, Leetile was appointed by the Ngwato Tribal Administration to become a *kgosi* at Mahalapye. By 1968, he was transferred to Tonota. Leetile formed the Federal Party at Serowe but left the idea of the party after being transferred to Mahalapye. During the marriage crisis, Leetile supported Seretse because it was through Seretse's effort that he was able to go back to Serowe. Leetile was a writer and most of his books are used in schools. He has produced about seven books: '*Dintshontsho tsa Lorato*', '*Sekgoma I*', '*Legae Botshabelo*', '*Sefalana sa Menate*', '*Motswasele I*', '*Mokomaditlhare*' and '*Macbeth*' (Translation into Setswana).

His last book is '*Mokomaditlhare*' which he wrote when he was in his sick bed. Leetile successfully finished the book and submitted it to South Africa for publication. The publishers brought back the manuscript for corrections. I made corrections with Leetile. In fact I was reading aloud and showing him where corrections were needed. Leetile did not live to see his book in circulation in 1972. The publishers sent me money for the publication and circulation of all Raditladi's book. At least they send me money twice per year. The amount of money depends on market situation. For example, I received an amount of P6 000 for the first publication of '*Mokomaditlhare*'. That Leetile was a writer is

shown by the fact that he contributed articles to the '*Naledi ya Batswana*'. Leetile called himself the observer instead of his actual name.

ADDENDUM 27

Name: Confidential

Date: 26/07/1984

Before the Bagakgametse affair, Disang loved and respected Tshekededi. In fact, Disang contributed 12 cattle towards the marriage of Tshekededi to Bagakgametse. Disang was the son of Raditladi Sekgoma and was the headman (*kgosana ya kgotla*) of Monamo ward. Tshekededi regard bo-Raditladi as his uncles (*borangwaneagwe*)

During the conflict of Leetile and Tshekededi the feeling of Bangwato was the feeling of the chief. If the chief said something it meant that no one could defy that. Some reluctantly agreed with what the chief said.

Leetile's regiment was Lekgasa and the leader was Keaboka Kgama. Tshekededi was born in 1905 and was Leletamotse. Leetile was also known as Letsweletse.

Disang married twice. His first wife was Mokalaka Mookodi and had five children with her. His second wife was Nkwane and they had three children

Leetile was an innovator, he arranged parts of the homestead in lines in Mahalapye and this portion is known as *Dilaene*. While in Mahalapye he was running a café called '*Mpha mpha e a lapisa*' Leetile is perhaps remembered by

the fact that one of the primary schools in Mahalapye named the school after him because they appreciated the services he rendered to the village while he was working over there. Leetile fell seriously ill on 25 December 1969. He took leave and went to Mahalapye. He failed to recover and was taken to doctors in Bulawayo in 1971 at Mpilo hospital. He remained in this hospital for three months without any recovery and was taken back home. He finally died on 8 September 1971 and was buried in Mahalapye. Leetile was suffering from incurable disease, that is, cancer of the bones.

[The respondent was reluctant to talk about the conflict between Leetile and Tshekedi. Her main reason is that she was young at the time and did not know what was happening. But it seems probable that the late husband revealed everything to her. The respondent has gone to School at Adams College in Natal.]

Reference

Boikhutso, Keene (1985)