Cultural Education in Setswana Poetry - With Special Reference to L.D. Raditladi

D S Matjila

Correspondence: D S Matjila, Department of African Languages, 7-057 Theo van Wijk Building, University of South Africa. E-mail: matjids@unisa.ac.za

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Abstract

This article explores Setswana poetry illustrating cultural relevance and restitution that it embodies and might teach. Setswana language functions primarily in the realm of orality and language preserves extensive use of proverbs, history and folk stories. Cultural images pervade Batswana life and imagination, touching the sensations, emotions and imagination, and therefore run as a thread that connects language, proverb, oral and written poetry and history. Bhabha's theory uses analogy and translation, and this study advocates the use of African culture. This background links well with Raditladi's cultural connoisseur in his poetry. This research argues for the revitalization of African poetry in all spheres of life.

Keyword: proverbs, natural phenomena, stories, beliefs and customs

1. Introduction

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 dancing 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 language to the best of their ability. They learned stories by heart because they were repeated over and over.

The boys herded sheep and goats and later cattle. During this period, they would learn the vocabulary used by herd boys, the 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 cow's urine.

They would also create their own praise songs to communicate with these domestic animals. Like many rural boys who spent most of their time with cattle and were harshly disciplined by 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 them and then find an excuse to thrash them. Such an incident would never be reported to their parents. This was a way of making them obedient to seniors, to carry their own burden of pain and suffering – the true qualities of manhood and 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. He was surrounded by uncles who had both cultural and Western education, i.e. his mother's brothers, the sophisticated Ratshosa brothers and his knowledgeable paternal uncles Sekgoma II and Tshekedi Khama. He witnessed the traditional judicial structure centred on the hereditary chief. The chief presided over the *kgotla* (the tribal court) and passed judgement. He learned the wisdom of Setswana proverbs such as "*Kgosi, thipa e sega molootsi*" (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 were engraved on his personality. He learned to appreciate natural beauty, the thatch houses, cattle kraals, tribal court, traditional clothes, shoes and hats. He bonded with domestic and wild animals and beasts as well as the birds of the veld. 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.

2. Literature and Culture in Southern African Environment

This paper is based upon the premise that learners in our multilingual and multicultural 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. By 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 result in stereotypical misrepresentations of African cultures and peoples. It is important that the basic education of African children include their culture.

3. Societal, Anthropological and Humanistic milieu of 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 take 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 stories 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 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.

4. Formation of Moral Thinking Regarding Values and Norms

Raditladi believed 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. The thesis of this chapter therefore focuses on teaching for cultural restoration. 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.

Considering 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.

5. Cultural 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 originality 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; its re-news 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, 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 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 appropriate.

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* (1964:11)

> 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 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. His 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 a 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 Khama 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 for loving and caring for the orphans. They are also accountable for the orphans' 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 stepparents, this would never replace 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 suggests that *Ga bo na motho a bo tlhapa ka mosidi*, it remains stubborn and unerasable.

From a traditional cultural background *mosidi* is used by the Batswana and Africans in general to clean their teeth.

Mosidi is known for removing even the most stubborn stains one can think of. *Bosiela* is an imaginary situation 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 a human quality, 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 further 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 sebodu se tlhokang dipheko (1964:11)

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 need 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* signifies the piercing action of the sickle bush thorn, 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 caused 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 (1964:11)

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. Batswana have a proverb "*Kunkuru leba le le tuna 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 at the best of times, such as mealtimes, 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 (1964:11)

Orphanhood 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 carnivorous bird which looks like *letototo*, a white-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 symbolic reference 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* is one way of cleaning, maintaining or keeping Batswana homes tidy and orderly. *Go kgapha* is using cow dung to smear the floor and make 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 using an untranslatable concept derived from the root *tsetse* in the words (*botsetse/lotsetse/motsetse*), which has fundamental intricacies in Setswana custom and African convention in general. The following examples enlighten this assertion clearly:

Thamalakane kgomo ya lotsetse (1964:22) Thamalakane, the cow that has calved.

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

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 (1964:22)

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* is an affirmation of the spirit of promoting extension of blood relations between families. The groom's and the bride's families exchange 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. Her maternal grandmother will serve as a midwife and look after her immediately after she gives birth. 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. 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*.

There is no real equivalent in the English culture. 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). This work agrees with Bhabha that "culture as an inactive, enunciator site opens possibilities for other 'times' of cultural meaning", in this case, retroactive (Bhabha 1994:178).

Botsetse refers to the Setswana custom in which 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) or cross poles were placed 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 fallen off, it was buried in the yard (ibid).

This was 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.

A person is therefore 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. The Care and Education of Children Learning from Poetry

The model teaching for cultural relevance and restoration through poetry is significant. Language, culture, history, proverbs and stories are intertwined in poetry. This is 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, folksong and drama (1983:1).

For educational purposes, this paper looks 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.

Poetry is therefore a medium for transmitting beliefs and values present in the culture of Setswana speakers, as could be discerned in Raditladi. In his poem *Motlhokagae*, 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 clearly:

Ba mpopela kgomo ya mmopa, ya lela, (1964:8)

They moulded a clay cow and it lowed.

[They fabricated lies about me]

Namane ya yone ka ba ka e kotela

I ended up being its calf-boy.

[Many people believed the lies]

Ya phunya mogodu wa lesea tharing

Tearing a baby's stomach in the womb

A tsena mo tharing ya tshepe e sa segwa

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 poem above have words such as "*a lela; wa lesea and mo tharing"*. The English equivalent is "Dumb folks get no lands" (Plaatje 1916:74). This 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 them.

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 proverb can teach not only about culture, but also about language. The word *thari*, for example, translated as "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 several 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*.

Raditladi is indeed crying, so that he should not die in his mother's cradle.

He uses imagery to communicate his 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 (1964:8)

Open your ears and I will open 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 such as *duma* and *kurutla,* which show 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 heartbeat.

This illustrates the severity of the pain in his heart. He tried to defend himself by 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.

(I am not guilty of any offence.)

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 gum 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 tlhaela (1964:9)

I can only be reached telephonically.

On horseback you may not reach me

People would never reach him even if they used horses as a mode of transport. People could only contact him by telephone. 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. (1964:9)

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 Raditladi's feelings. As a learned man with a university education, a member of the royal family whose father was very wealthy, it was very difficult to see himself in such a state, especially as his dream was to further his studies abroad. 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 mokoa
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(1964:8)

If the stars of the heavens can call my name
If my spirit can rise 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, symbolises 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 humankind, 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 part 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 BC.

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 is 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 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 Khama ntlwana
Ke re, ntlwana ya gago e gone, morena
Mogope o gone gorogela morafe (1964:37).

I wish the heavens were nearer.

I was going to build a tombstone for Khama.

And say, your home is in heaven, my lord.

There is food for your people' sake.

Raditladi is thanking Khama 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 Khama. Raditladi aspires to bestow honour on Khama by building a sanctuary for him in heaven. Here Raditladi elevates Khama's dignity and integrity to the highest level. He would like to do this to show his gratitude and appreciation for all the good things Khama has done for his people.

Raditladi is grateful for Khama III's achievements. He is showing appreciation by expressing his feelings in poetry. Poetry was and still is the most powerful medium of communication. It is a sign of *botho/ubuntu* to be grateful if people take care of you. Khama III was like a good mother to his nation, just like the mother in the story, "love conquers all" (Plaatje 2007). Khama 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:

Hitlara re kile ra utlwa a ipolela

A re ke tladi e kileng ya tshosa ditšhaba

Le basadi ya ba tlholela go lela

Rona ra re phenyo ka matlho o tla e leba

Ka diatla gone ga a na go e tshwara

Majeremane ba roroma diphara (1964:31)

We heard Hitler boasting about his military genius.

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 bums started to shiver.

Raditladi describes Hitler as a tyrant who kills, terrorises, slaughters, terrifies, bullies and intimidates people. In his poem, Raditladi describes Hitler as a cruel monster who was bloodthirsty, 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 German soil. As is always the case, self-righteous people reap what they sow in life.

In Raditladi's poem, Hitler was defeated together with his allies. He escaped and no one knows where he went. It is assumed that he committed suicide, but there is no convincing evidence of this. Germany suffered because 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 humans. 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 has similar characteristics of arrogance and haughtiness and he paid a big price for his 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, *King Shaka* and *King Khama*. Shaka's lineage is Zulu ka Malandela – Intombela ka Nkosikhulu Zulu – Zuluphunga ka Gumede – Mageba ka Gumede – Ndaba ka Mageba – Jama ka Ndaba – Senzangakhona ka Jama - Shaka Zulu, renowned founder of the Zulu kingdom.

The poem is based on Shaka's history. It has been recorded that Shaka 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, but he was also an incredibly smart leader of his time:

Tšhaka ya rema dikgata tsa batho

Ya phunya mogodu wa lesea thariing (1964:41)

His 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 portrays 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. Raditladi continues saying that Shaka's spear:

Ya runa letsetse le nta moriring

Demolishes lice and fleas in the hair

Raditladi employs 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. Raditladi gave a clear message to Africans to be proud of who they are, and not to imitate other nations. His use of images, even though exaggerated, depicts the kind of person Shaka was. The ruthlessness with which he carried out his campaigns and his disciplinary actions regarding people who disobeyed him put him on par with the some of the warriors in the world.

In contrast to Shaka's terror were Kgosi Khama and Moshoeshoe 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).

Khama is like still water, he is calm, gentle, kind and humane. That is why Pixley Seme says:

…If you would go with me to Bechuanaland, face their
Council of headmen, and ask what motives caused them
recently to decree so empathically that alcoholic drinks
shall not enter their country -visit their king Khama; ask
for what cause he leaves the gold and ivory of his ancestors,
its mountain strongholds and all its august ceremony to
wonder daily from village to village through all his kingdom!
without any guard or any decoration of his rank- a preacher
of industry and education and an apostle of the new order
of things (Seme's speech, 1906)

Raditladi is equates Khama to steel water, *metsi a sediba.*

Kgosi wena le Mošwešwe lo a lekana

Kgosi you and Mošwešwe are equally good. (1964:37)

Moshoeshoe 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.

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).

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 (1964:25)

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 society. It is 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 is an intensification of the training of the girls in the home. It is communal in nature, being done in groups according to age. The whole community takes the initiative and decides on what direction the initiation will take. The young men still spend time with the cattle but, as senior herd-boys, they can 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 is often done with lashes which they themselves 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) is an often-quoted adage.

Obedience is valued traditionally and inculcated and enforced in the initiation schools. Their primary purpose is 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 instils in these new members of society their social responsibilities and duties, which is a far cry from today's emphasis in civil society on social rights.

Initiation schools teach love and respect for nature; young people also learn 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) is 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 are 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 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 people's lives. Ngwale is a girl of marriageable age, who has just graduated from *bojale* (girls 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, 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 directly 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 person could marry or participate 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, this choice was suicidal.

Raditladi's images show the advantages of the traditional African school that concentrated not only on the intellectual development of the learners, but also 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, willing and able 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. (1964:34)

He was not wrapped in a cow skin.

It was indicated earlier in the introduction that a cow is *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.

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 *šokgwe,* an onion-like, bulbous root, the scales of which she unobtrusively drops as she goes on her way, but especially at the crossroads. 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 phirimalelwa 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* (A monkey with prickly hair defends herself against all approaches). The English equivalent is "Every genius is defended from approach by quantities of unavailableness" (Plaatje 2016:26). People should always respect traditional taboos and customs to be safe. They should always be guided by their conscience, and they must uphold the moral values of society. The advantage of the practice was 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)**

Baboki ba dikgosi basenyi
Baboki ba rona balotlhanyi
Ba sotla ka dikgosi ba tshega
Ba re kgomo thokwana e a raga
Thokwana e ragile bagami
Banyana ba tsoga ba bopame (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 chief's 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 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 (1964:40)

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 image in the poem as well as the story explains the Setswana proverb: *letlhaku je leswa 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.

7. Conclusion

The research has only made a brief foray into the poetry illustrating the kind of cultural relevance and restoration it embodies and might teach. The space in between languages and cultures is pedagogically fertile, opening new times of cultural meaning. In the researcher's analysis of poems, 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 repeatedly demonstrates in the study that group existence is a fundamental pillar of Batswana society. Community, certainly in the past, therefore 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 one's 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 aim and end of the care and education of children, as it emerges from the 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 are humanistic values shared across cultures. Values, however, are perennial and they mould and chisel the granite that is character of *botho*.

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